

Gannon, Fred A.

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OLD SALEM  
SCRAP BOOKS

*By* FRED A. GANNON



# OLD SALEM SCRAP BOOK

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FRED A. GANNON

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Low Prices of the Gay Nineties  
Old Salem Sayings and  
Miscellany



SHOPPING AT THE GROCERY STORE

Printed by Newcomb & Gauss  
in City Hall Square, Salem, Mass.  
for the  
Salem Books Co., M. F. McGrath, *President.*

A very faint, blurry background image of a person in historical attire, possibly a woman in a white blouse and a dark shawl or skirt, standing in a landscape with trees and a building.

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## THE LOW PRICES OF THE GAY NINETIES

### Introduction

“Eureka! I’ve found out why the nineties were gay” said Ichabod, the Amateur Economist.

“Maybe you would like to know the why, if you are wrestling with the H. C. L., 20 taxes, pin money, etc. etc.”

“We would indeed” said the Ups and Downs in unison. The club had dined, and wanted somebody to talk to it. So Ichabod, the Ama-Economist, spoke his piece.

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## THE GOOD OLD DAYS

“You’ve heard, have you not, of the good old days when a dollar bought a lot of fodder, fuel, fabric and what not, and—

“Costs of living were so low a young fellow could take time off now and then to go fishing, or just loaf, and—

“Old folks took life easy on savings bank money, and—

“It didn’t cost a fortune to go to school, or a wedding, or a picnie.

“Them were the good old days. Alas and Alack! They’ve gone never to return. But maybe you would like to hear about them.

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## BREAD AND BUTTER PRICES

Just cast the eyes over some prices that the predecessors paid. Feast the mind upon them. The like won't be quoted again.

"Flour at from \$4 to \$4.50 a barrel, delivered to the kitchen closet. A loaf of bread, or a pan of hot biscuits, made from the flour, cost about five cents. A penny's worth of yeast, from the neighboring store, raised a batch of bread.

A five pound box of creamery butter cost \$1. Cooking butter, 17 cents regular and 14 cents on bargain days.

Molasses, and youngsters liked 'lasses on bread, was had for ten cents a quart, or 30 cents a gallon, the buyer supplying the jug. If five gallons were bought, the grocer gave a keg for it.

Bread, good home-made bread, was the staff of life of the gay nineties. A pan of hot gingerbread was a feast. There were also the gingerbread men for children to devour.

## CHEAP HEAT

Heat, the second necessity, it coming next after food, was also low priced in the gay nineties.

Coal cost \$5 a ton and up for the hard kinds. Soft coal was cheaper. Some mixed the bituminous with tan, had free from the tanneries, and kept the home fires burning.

Wood cost \$5 a cord, more or less, the buyer to saw and split it, and stack it in the wood shed. That was oft the task of boys.

Boys also gathered up waste wood from shops, limbs trimmed from tree, and old shingles taken off the roof tops, and added them to the fuel supply.

The kitchen stove, after cooking food all day, warmed the family circle in the evening. The stove in the parlor was heated up Sundays. A few had bed room stoves, and in them made "quick fires" morning and evening.

Thrifty folks let the fires out at night and started them again in the morning, unless it was so cold the water was likely to freeze.

A few hardy old timers opened the window when the thermometer marked above 60. They wore red flannels.

## \$5 and \$10 SUITS

“Clothes, the third necessity, also were low of price in the gay nineties,” continued Ichabod, The Amateur Economist.

“A \$10 bill bought a Sunday best suit, all wool, and ready made. A work suit, also of wool, cost \$5.

“Trousers, sometimes called panta, or pantaloons, cost \$2.50. Overcoats were had at from \$5 to \$10, regular price, and sometimes at half price for odds and ends at bargain sales.

“A custom made suit cost \$12.50 at McManus & McCarthy’s store, “open evenings.” Some tailors charged more.

“A Little Lord Fauntleroy suit, or a sailor suit, for the small boy, cost \$2.50 and up. School suits also were cheaper. Sometimes the store gave a baseball bat with each suit.

## HABERDASHERY PRICES

The haberdashers sold black derby hats at \$1.50 and up. Hard hats, oft worn until the crown got cracked. Straw hats 50 cents.

A white shirt, if laundered to a stiff bosom, was had for 75 cents. If bought “soft” and starched and ironed at home, the charge was but 50 cents.

Collars and cuffs, to be attached to shirts, sold as cheap as five cents each. Thrifty men bought celluloid collars.

An ordinary necktie cost a quarter, and a "dress up tie" as much as 50 cents. Cotton stockings were as cheap as  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cents a pair.

Home knitted mittens kept the hands warm in winter.

### PIE PRICES

"Boys, who went to High School in The Gay Nineties, recessed to Pease & Price's bake shop and feasted on Washington pie at the rate of a nickel for a quarter of a pie, big round, and thick through, "Dinny" put so much raspberry jam in it that the jam oozed out on to the fingers. The man who wanted a morning snack, got a piece of pie for a nickel, and a cup of coffee for another nickel at most any restaurant.

"As for home made pies, apples for them cost \$1 a barrel, and pie meat, for mince pies, three cents a pound. Lard for making the pie crust cost a nickel a pound. Old fashioned house keepers "tried out" lard, they made it in the kitchen.

Pies were baked six and twelve and twenty on baking day, and were served for breakfast, dinner and supper. Men folks had a piece of pie, with a

slice of cheese, before going to bed. When youngsters went to grandmothers for Thanksgiving dinner, three pieces of pie, mince, apple and squash, were served after turkey, and there was also plum pudding.

### 5 & 10 CENT LOBSTERS

Mr. Weeks, the lobster man who pushed the cart around, sold little lobsters for a nickel and large ones for a dime. Harbor lobsters, fresh from the kettle.

Down town folks walked to the lobster houses on Salem Neck and bought a basket of lobsters for 50 cents; or 60 or 75 cents, according to the number and size of the lobsters in the basket. For Sunday dinner, a whole lobster was put on each plate.

Some dwellers on the water front pulled lobsters from their traps, or from sea weed on the rocks—or they dug a mess of clams from the sands. Free food, was it not?

### 15 CENT STEWS

The restaurant near City Hall, at one time Masury's and at another Hutchinson's, served a bowl of beef stew that was a meal, for 15 cents,—and on Fridays a bowl of fish chowder for a like price.

At Newcomb's oyster house, in Derby Market a clam cake cost a nickel, and it was so big and sturdy that one cake, and a cup of coffee, made a noon lunch for some.

Beans, "a thousand on a plate" for a dime, with two slices of bread, was restaurant routine.

The "hot dog carts" sold a sausage on a roll for a nickel, and, for the same price a sandwich of thick sliced ham, and a slice of onion free if wished.

### CHEAP SWEETS

I. P. Harris & Read sold white sugar at five cents a pound in the spring of 1897, and at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents on bargain days.

Brown sugar, preferred by some, was quoted at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents, and loaf sugar, for the tea party at  $5\frac{1}{2}$  cents.

Vermont maple sugar at two pounds for 25 cents, and syrup at \$1 a gallon, and 79 cents for the lesser grades.

"Hand rolled" chocolates at 20 cents a pound. The best girl liked them.

Children bought sticks of candy for a penny, six sticks for a nickel. Elders bought peppermint drops for a dime a pound. Rock candy cost more.

The corner drug store served a glass of soda,

vanilla, chocolate or strawberry, for a nickel, and an ice cream soda, or a milk shake, for a dime. A dollar bought a gallon of ice cream.

“Billy” Nourse, at his celebrated store opposite City Hall, served ice cream at five cents a plate—two spoons if a boy shared the cream with his chum.

### 50 CENT FISH DINNERS

A fish dinner cost 50 cents at the sea shore restaurant. That was for the ordinary chowder, clam, lobster and ice cream dinner.

The “Extra Special” cost \$1. Platters of fried sea food were put on the table. “Help yourself.”

### FREE FOR CATCHING

Men and boys rowed down the harbor and fished for fun as well as for food. Cunners and flounders were hauled up on the line, oft enough to share with the neighbors. One afternoon in the fall more than 100 men and boys were fishing for smelts off Derby wharf. Others with hook and line on other wharves, and in boats.

## CRACKERS &amp; CHEESE

Common crackers cost six cents a pound. Country cheese, including sage cheese, was had for 15 cents a pound. The grocer offered a piece cut from the big cheese on the counter and said "Try the Taste."

Cobb, Bates & Yerxa, in the spring of 1897, offered Roquefort cheese at 30 cents a pound.

Milk was five or six cents a quart. A bowl of crackers and milk was a low priced supper.

Boys picked blueberries in the pastures, to be added to the crackers and milk, also to be made into berry pies.

Fruit stores sold blue berries at ten cents a quart, and strawberries, along about Fourth of July time, at three boxes for 25 cents.

## AGE OF ABUNDANCE

"Now I've told you enough to show that the family budget was but a few dollars a week in the gay nineties.

"The reason why, which I promised to tell, is that taxes were low."

So saying, Inchabod, The Amateur Economist, took his seat, and a glass of water. The Chief Upper

of the Club rose, said Thank you to Ichabod, and to the members—"Any question, gentlemen, about the abundance that made the nineties gay?

### CHEAP ENTERTAINMENT

"What price amusements?" asked the cheerful youth.

Ichabod said—"10, 20 and 30 cents for admission to "The Chimes of Normandy, or other popular operas by the Andrews, Moulton & Johnson Co. A reserved seat to hear a minstrel show, amateur or professional, 50 cents. Admission 25 cents.

"A car ride to The Willows cost a nickel. Some walked for exercise and to view the scenery. Free concerts by the Salem Cadet band, Jean Missud, leader.

"For \$2 a young fellow hired a horse and buggy, in winter a horse and sleigh, and took his best girl to ride.

"Sunday evenings, young people gathered about the piano, or the organ, in the parlor and sang the old songs.

Pleasant, inexpensive ways to maintain morale, were they not?

### CHEAP MEAT

“What were meat prices? You haven’t said much about them.” So remarked the family man.

Ichabod replied—“I’ll quote a few. Sirloin steak 25 cents a pound; chuck steak two pounds for 25 cents, rolled roast 15 cents, stew beef three cents. Pork seven cents, Lamb eight cents. Turkeys 18 cents. Thrifty shoppers got a turkey from a stand in Derby Market for \$1.

“Liver three pounds for 25 cents. Bacon 15 cents. Frankforts two pounds for 25 cents. Hams ten cents a pound and smoked shoulder at seven. Some Salem families raised pigs and had the hams and bacon smoked by “Billy” Glidden.

“Corned beef cost from three to six cents a pound. Quail at \$1.50 a dozen. Pie meat, for mince pies, three cents. If Fido went to the store with the shopper, the meat cutter tossed him a bone to take home.

### DIME SHAVES

The poet, long of hair, arose and asked “What prices at the barber’s?”

Ichabod reported—“A shave for a dime, and a hair cut for a quarter. Boy’s 15 cents. Beards trimmed for a dime.”

### \$2 A DAY HOTELS

What about hotels? asked the traveling man.

Ichabod replied—"The rate in commerical hotels was \$2 a day and up. A boarding house offered rooms at \$2 a week and up, and board for \$3.50 a week.

"A meal ticket at a restaurant, or eating house was as cheap as \$3. The price of breakfast, dinner and supper for a week. Hotels put on pretty good banquets for \$1 a plate.

Some summer hotels had a rate of \$1 a day.

"Down on the farm" the charge was \$3 or \$4 a week.

### THE \$2.98 EASTER BONNET

"Did ladies' clothes cost much" inquired Newlywed.

"Of that, I'm not informed as much as I might be" Ichabod replied. "However, I'll quote from the records.

"An Easter bonnet, in 1897, cost \$2.98. A wire frame, to be trimmed at home, was had for 25 cents at Frank Cousin's Bee-Hive. Ribbons, 5 cents a yard.

“Spring suits, and coats, cost from \$5 to \$10. Some women bought fabrics at from 25 to 50 cents a yard, and made their dresses at home.

“Bicycle suits, the sport clothes of the gay nineties, were had for \$6.75 at Webber’s. The ankle length models.

“Black cotton stockings, some with double soles, were quoted at 25 cents a pair. Black kid boots at \$2 and a button hook free with each pair.

“No beauty parlors in the gay nineties, you know.”

#### LOW TAXES—LOW PRICES

“Tell us more about low taxes, if you please,” said the man who had just bought a house.

“With pleasure,” Ichabod replied. “The local rate was \$16 or \$17 per \$1000. It was low when the watchdogs of the treasury were on guard in City Hall.

“Keeping down public spending was the popular purpose in the gay nineties. The mayor got \$1500 a year. The aldermen served for the honor of the office.

“The police chief was paid \$30 a week, and policemen from \$16 to \$18. The fire chief, a part-time worker, got \$15 a week. Firemen were volunteers,

with a few exceptions, like the engineers and drivers. The latter got about \$20 a week. They took care of the horses and greased the wagon wheels.

All along the line, for teachers, city men, meaning street department men, and lamp lighters, and clerks, the pay was \$20 a week, more or less.

So taxes were low. And the city tax was the chief tax, there being no income taxes, state or federal, nor profit taxes, no excise taxes on automobiles because the horseless vehicles were few,—and as for the tax on tobacco it was so low that no smoker noticed it.

“So, you see, taxes didn’t roll up like a snow ball, and swell and swell costs of food, clothing and shelter.

“Prices were low because taxes were low in the gay nineties, and young fellows could afford to take a day off now and then and go fishing, or loaf, and the old folks lived easy on savings bank money. The good old days, were they not?”

## OLD SALEM SAYINGS

Such as The Old Folks Were Brought Up On.

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## INTRODUCTION

“Listen, my children, and you shall hear” some of the sayings that old folks were brought up on.

So will others who “lend me their ears.”

“Short sayings express the wit and genius of a city” said the sage.

We offer a few old Salem sayings. Among them, may be, you’ll find one worth keeping in mind.

A quip in time, you know, ends the argument, caps the climax and makes the nub of a story. It also livens up the conversation; and the correspond-  
ee.

## BENTLEY'S BITS

We'll begin with a few bits of wisdom by Dr. Bentley, pastor of the old East church who "took the whole town for his parish." In his diary he jotted down such lines as these:—

"Let not inclination, nor impulse. wrest the helm from reason."

"Every man is entitled to the kind look, the familiar reply and the most pleasing civilities."

Of a critic he said:—

"He has all senses excepting common sense."

Of a candidate for office he remarked:—

"He claimed to be a self made man. But all parts of the work were not well done."

Of a letter critical of a current topic Bentley said:—

"It is not penned with that accuracy which might have been wished."

After too freely expressing his own views he wrote as a rule for future guidance:—

"Put thy hand over the door of thy mouth."

## TRADE PHRASES

We'll go on with phrases that men learned in their trades, such as these:—

“Strike while the iron is hot” said the smith.

“Hit the nail on the head” exclaimed the carpenter.

“As square as a brick” observed the mason.

“Cut the coat to fit the cloth” advised the thrifty tailor.

“A stitche in time saves nine” claimed the mender.

“Save at the spigot and waste at the bunghole” observed the grocer.

“Every tub should stand on its own bottom” affirmed the cooper.

“As empty as a barrel” said the critic of the stump speaker's speech.



## ADMONITIONS TO APPRENTICES

Oft was the apprentice urged to "Double Diligence"—And was reminded to "Waste not—want not." And that "a penny saved is a penny earned." Further, he was told to "be as busy as a bee." and was sometimes advised that "the longest way round is the shortest way home."

The poet put it:—

"Little Johnny Purchase going to the mill.

"The farthest way round is the shortest way home."

## "FOOL'S ERRAND"

The witty master workman sent his apprentice on "a fool's errand" so as to "sharpen his wits." He told the lad to go for "a left handed monkey wrench," "a bucket of steam," "a pound of white lamp black" or a "quart of oil of spikes."

The printer told his "devil" to look for "type lice." When the unlucky wight had his eyes close to the types the printer sharply closed the form and the lad got his face spattered with inky water.

The school teacher said—"If at first you don't succeed, try try again." The cynic exclaimed—"All play and no work makes Jack a dull boy."

## SAYINGS NAUTICAL

We'll go on with sayings by Jack Tar, Ben Boltrope, Bill Boystay and Harry Haulyard, seaman of old Salem.

They told of Jonah, who had an adventure with a whale, and of Davy's Jones who kept a locker way down below.

They said sharp things about "ship cousins" and "dirt sailors," meaning those who talked sailor talk and ne'er went near the water—also of "brass heads," the "brass hats" of their time.

"Horse Marines" were drivers of baggage wagons.

"Free gigs" were free lunches.

"Salem harbor mess" was a fish dinner.

"The Pepper Port" was Salem's nickname in the period what Salem ships brought home hot spice for the nation.

"Keep the jaw port shut" cried the sailor. The poet said "Silence is golden."

"As loud of one of Peale's whispers" was said of the captain who "had a voice like a fog horn."

### “PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE”

“Slowly, young ladies, grace is never in a hurry.” The admonition of a Salem matron to “The younger set.”

“Nothing can be more useful to a man than a determination not to be hurried.” So Thoreau said as he looked upon “slaves of speed” in his time.

### “PANDEMOMIUM PREVAILS”

“Universal madness riots in Main st.” So Hawthorne commented as he viewed the passing scene.

### “GOING TO THE BOW WOWS”

“A nation cannot long exist when the highest pitch of excitement is demanded every minute.” So Dr. Bentley remarked as he viewed “unquiet and scambling times.”

### QUAKER WORDS

One man of Salem in 1947 could (but seldom did) use the old Quaker words “thee” and “thou” and “thine.”

## IRISH PHRASES

Here and there are men who speak the cheery greeting—"Top of the morning to you" and bidding a friend goodby, add "God bless you."

## "BE ON TIME"

A wit of city hall once added to a notice of a committee meeting these lines:—

"The strongest dictates of our soundest reason require each member to be here in season."

## HOME SONGS

"Seeing Nellie Home." P. S. Gilmore wrote this song, of a maid of Salem it is said.

Boys of old Salem liked to sing—"When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again.

## ODD &amp; ENDS

"It rains pitchfolks."

"Cold enough to freeze a crow bar."

"As hot as hasty pudding."

"As slow as cold molasses."

"As old as Methuselah."

### “HEEDLESS HARRY”

“News went in one ear, and out the other.” So it was said of “Heedless Harry.”

### IRRITABLE PEOPLE

“Small pot, soon hot.” So it was remarked of peppery persons.

“His nose is out of joint” was said of “the likes of him.”

### FROM “THE HEADS”

“Rock 'em round the corner” was the cry in old Marblehead when “the silk stockings” of Salem appeared in town.

### “COURTING” TERMS

“Sitting on her front door steps”—“Waiting on her” and “sparking,” later “dating.” The old terms of the years when Salem folks sat on their front door steps summer evenings and Jack sat beside his Jill.

## STYLE NOTE

"The young lady had just made a purchase of the prettiest and most simple village bonnet that ever a woman wore."

Miss Silsbee 1887.



## SEEING THINGS

“He’s a star gazer”—an optimist.

“He looks through dark glasses”— a pessimist.

There was the man who “had a gimlet eye,” the man who had “eyes like an owl,” the man who “could see through a knot hole.”

And now there’s the man who asks—“where did I put my glasses?”

## “BE YOUR AGE”

“A man can not pick cherries in Kent in December.”

Brought over by the forefathers.

## PESSIMIST’S EPITAPH

“Reader, I’ve left your world in which I had a world to do, sweating and fretting to get rich, and just as much a fool as you are.”

An inscription on a tomb stone, reported in The Salem Gazette of 1798.

## “EARLY TO RISE”

“We got up in time to pry up the sun.” A familiar saying of horse and buggy days.

### SPIC & SPAN

“He looks as if he stepped out of a band box.”

“She looks as if she came out of the top draw of the bureau.”

So it was said of the neatly dressed.

“The dude” was a fop of “the gay nineties.”

### WORTH REMEMBERING

“Remember what happened to the man who could resist everything but temptation.”

Another saying of horse and buggy days.

### RELATIVE VALUES

“A drink from a little spring is sweeter than a cup of water from a big river.”

“Is it better to be a big toad in a little puddle or a little toad in a big puddle?”

### THE DAY’S WORK

“It is such a labor to task the faculties of a man—such problems of profit and loss, of interest, of tare and tret, and gauging of all kinds in it, as demands a universal knowledge.”

Thoreau so wrote of merchants of old Salem.

### “A FACT IS A FACT”

For good measure, we'll add a few lines from a simple rhyme that the ancestors brought over:—

There was a monkey climbed up a tree.  
When he fell down, then down fell he.  
There was a crow set on a stone.  
When he was gone, there was none.  
There was an old wife did eat apple.  
When she ate two, she had eat a couple.  
There was a horse going to the mill  
When he got there, he stood still.  
There was a butcher did cut his thumb.  
When it did bleed, then blood did come.  
There was a lackey ran a race.  
When he ran fast, he ran apace.  
There was a cobbler clouting shoon.  
When they were mended, they were done.  
There was a chandler making a candle.  
When he them strip, he did them handle.  
There was a navy went into Spain.  
When it returned, it come again.

## THE DAY'S END

"Arrived at my haven of earthly rest at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past ten; committed myself to the arms of Morpheus & to the care of a gracious God."

William Wait Oliver wrote the lines in his diary after taking two long walks on August 8, 1802. Oliver was deputy collector in Salem Custom House in Hawthorne's time. He lived near 100 years.

## SIGNING OFF"

We add "turn rule" of the printer and so end this assortment of sayings of old Salem.

Among them, may be, is one or two worth keeping in mind for use "in the nick of time" to end an argument, "cap the climax," "nub the anecdote," or enliven the gossip of the hour.

P. S. More later, perhaps. Collecting sayings looks like an interesting hobby.

## "THE LAST CIGAR"

Some smokers of choice cigars, in Salem in the gay nineties, could recite from memory the poem about "The Last Cigar." It was written by J. Warren Fabens, who was fond of the sea and poetry, and good cigars, while he was on a voyage in 1887. The poem:—

'Twas off the blue Canaries,  
A glorious summer day,  
I sat upon the quarter deck  
And whiffed my cares away  
And as the volumed smoke arose,  
Like incense in the air,  
I heaved a sigh to think, in sooth,  
It was my last cigar.

I leaned against the quarter rail  
And gazed down in to the sea;  
E'en there the airy wreaths of smoke  
Were curling gracefully.  
Oh, what had I at such a time  
To do with wasting care?  
Alas, the trembling tear proclaims  
It was my last cigar.

I watched the ashes as it came  
Fast nearing to the end.  
I watched it as a friend will watch  
Beside a dying friend—  
I could not speak, I could not stir,  
But like a statue there,  
I whiffed the smoky volume  
Of that divine cigar.

At length the pile of ashes fell  
Like a child from a mother torn,  
And the smoke that I drew in and out  
Grew warm and yet more warm.  
I took one last, one lingering whiff—  
A long whiff of despair—spare the tale—  
I threw it from me,  
It was my last cigar.

I've seen the land of all I love  
Fade in the distance dim—  
And sighed above the blighted heart  
Where once proud hope had been.  
But now I felt a thrill  
Which could with no other compare,  
When off the blue Canaries  
I smoked my last cigar.

#### LESSON IN PEABODY MUSEUM

"Two passenger pigeons. The species now extinct."

So said the man of business, who is also a student of nature, as he looked at the display of birds in Peabody Museum.

"Handsome, aren't they?" he went on. "Of ancient ancestry, too. Remember the dove that Noah sent forth from the ark.

"Millions of them were in early America. Flocks of them were so big they cast shadows like clouds. It took a day for one of the larger flocks to fly over a village.

"In one year a billion passenger pigeons were sold in the food markets of New York.

"After that they vanished. No man has seen one since in this nation. The record stands time's test since 1885. "Yet I like the legend that the last of the passenger pigeons took to the wing and flew to a great wilderness in the north where they now abide.

"It may be, perhaps you will agree, that we need more trees and woods and to shelter our featured citizens."

#### TWO SALTONSTALLS

Hon. Leverett Saltonstall became Salem's first mayor when Salem started as a city in 1836.

The present Hon. Leverett Saltonstall is a U. S. Senator.

#### FIRST SALEM PRINTER

Young Samuel Hall set up a printing press in Salem in 1768, and on it printed "The Salem Gazette," which was the first newspaper in Salem and one of the first in America.

## IT WAS COFFEE, NOT PEPPER

"Most likely you never heard the story of how Capt. Benj. Crowninshield brought home coffee instead of pepper. I'm reminded of it each time I drink the Mocha & Java brew."

So the Talkative Guide said to the Inquisitive Visitor as they took lunch in the garden of the House of Seven Gables, after a walk about historic Salem.

The Visitor opened his mouth to drink and his ears to listen. The Guide opened his mouth and began his story.

"I had the tale from my grandsir. Tom Steadybreeze was he called. You may judge that he was a reliable man.

"When a slip of a boy, not much more than twelve, Tom sailed as cabin boy on the America, of the Crowninshield fleet.

"Capt. Benj. Crowninshield took the America out of Salem harbor, which you now see spread before you. He had orders to bring back a cargo of pepper, it being that then old Salem was 'The Pepper Port' of the nation. It was in the year of 1804. Old Capt. Crowninshield, the head of the house, had warned Capt. Benj. not to break orders this time, like he had done before.

"The America made a quick voyage around Cape of Good Hope—no Suez canal then, you know—and put in to the Ile de Bourbon which is in lat. 22-53; long. 55-30 in case you wish to look it up on the map.

"Capt. Benj. went ashore to get news of trade. He heard that pepper was scarce and high on the pepper coast, while coffee was plenty and cheap in Arabia.

"He had orders to bring back pepper. But he decided to load coffee and, so deciding, he made ready his long guns and got up small arms and ammunition, because he had to run the pirates' blockade to get to port and load coffee.

"Some months later, the look outs on Baker's island, the outpost of old Salem harbor, were surprised to make out the America headed for the main ship channel weeks before she was expected.

"They sent the news to Salem. Old Capt. Crowninshield could scarcely believe it. Nor could others.

"A group started down the harbor on a small boat to learn the what and why of the news. "It must be" said one solemnly "that Capt. Benj. has broken orders again."

"Another sniffed the air, brightened up, rubbed his nose and sniffed again. "I think I smell coffee" said he hopefully.

"Others sniffed and they also hopefully spoke of coffee.

"The old Capt., after a bit of sniffing, shouted through his speaking trumpet. "What's your cargo?"

"It doesn't smell like pepper, does it?" replied Capt. Benj., Yankee wise.

"I smell coffee, not pepper" the old Capt. roared. "Tell me quick what you've got below or I'll tan your hide."

"Coffee from Arabia" yelled Capt. Benj. "The old Capt. and friends, cheered. That puzzled Capt. Benj. He had coffee for a cargo, not pepper as he had been told.

"The long and short of it" coneluded the Guide, "is that soon after Capt. Benj. sailed the America out of Salem, the bottom dropped out of the pepper market on account of large supplies, while coffee became scarce and soared in price. The America's cargo was sold to Dutch coffee traders at a profit of \$100,000.

"Grandsir got his share of the profit, to be sure. But he had a puzzled mind. He couldn't figure out if it was seamen's luck, or seamen's judgment, that earned the profit.

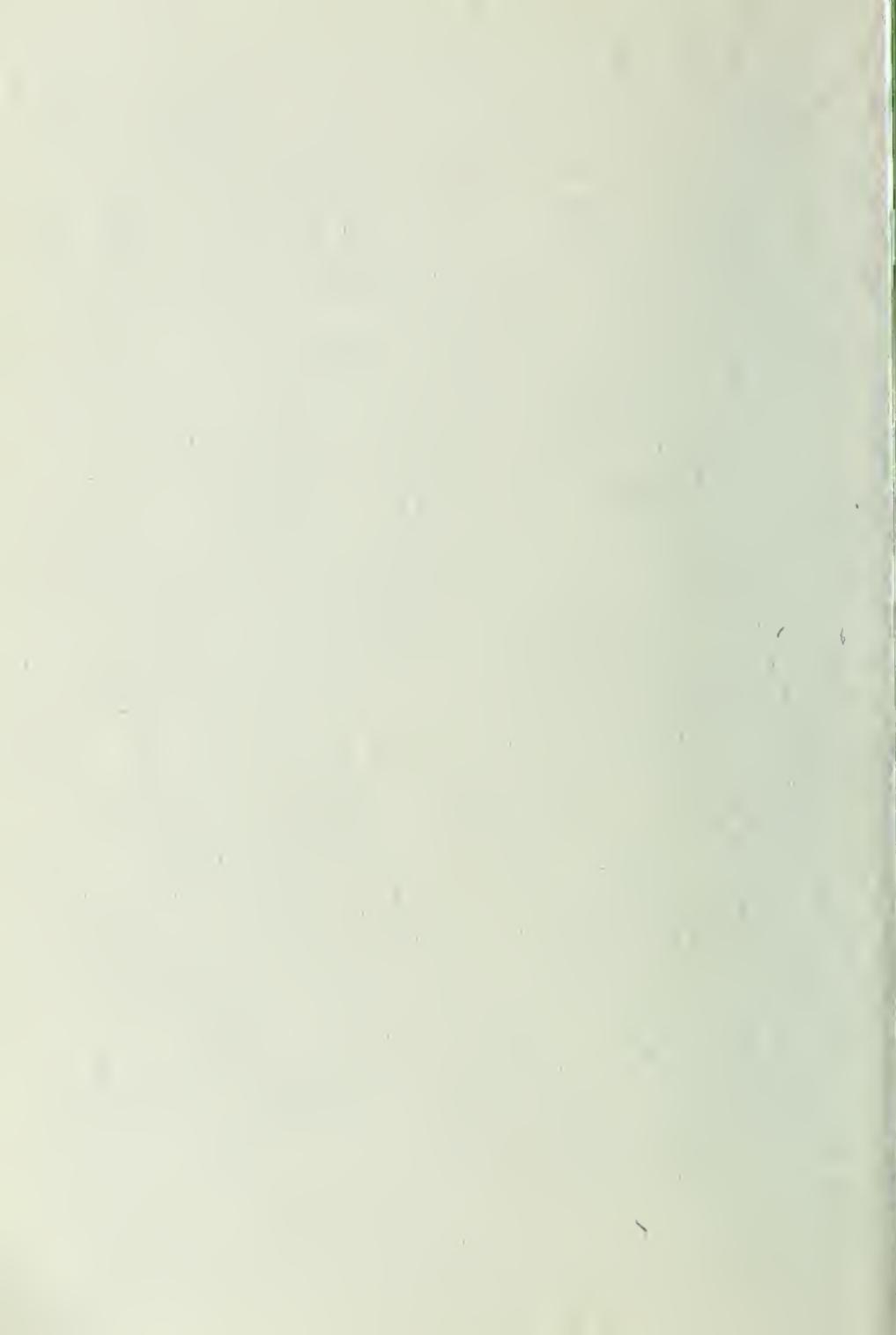
The Visitor thought it over a moment and then said. "May be it was both. Some men are born under a lucky star, you know. And there's an old adage or two about the man who grabs opportunity by the forelock and rides on the tide of fortune."

#### THE OLD FERRY

A ferry was early started between Salem and Marblehead and continued until after the Revolution.

The ferry landing in Salem was at the foot of Turner's lane, about where the House of Seven Gables now stands.





# OLD SALEM SCRAP BOOK

## No. 2.

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FRED A. GANNON

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Horse and Buggy Sayings

The Steam Wagon

The First Printing Press

Miscellany



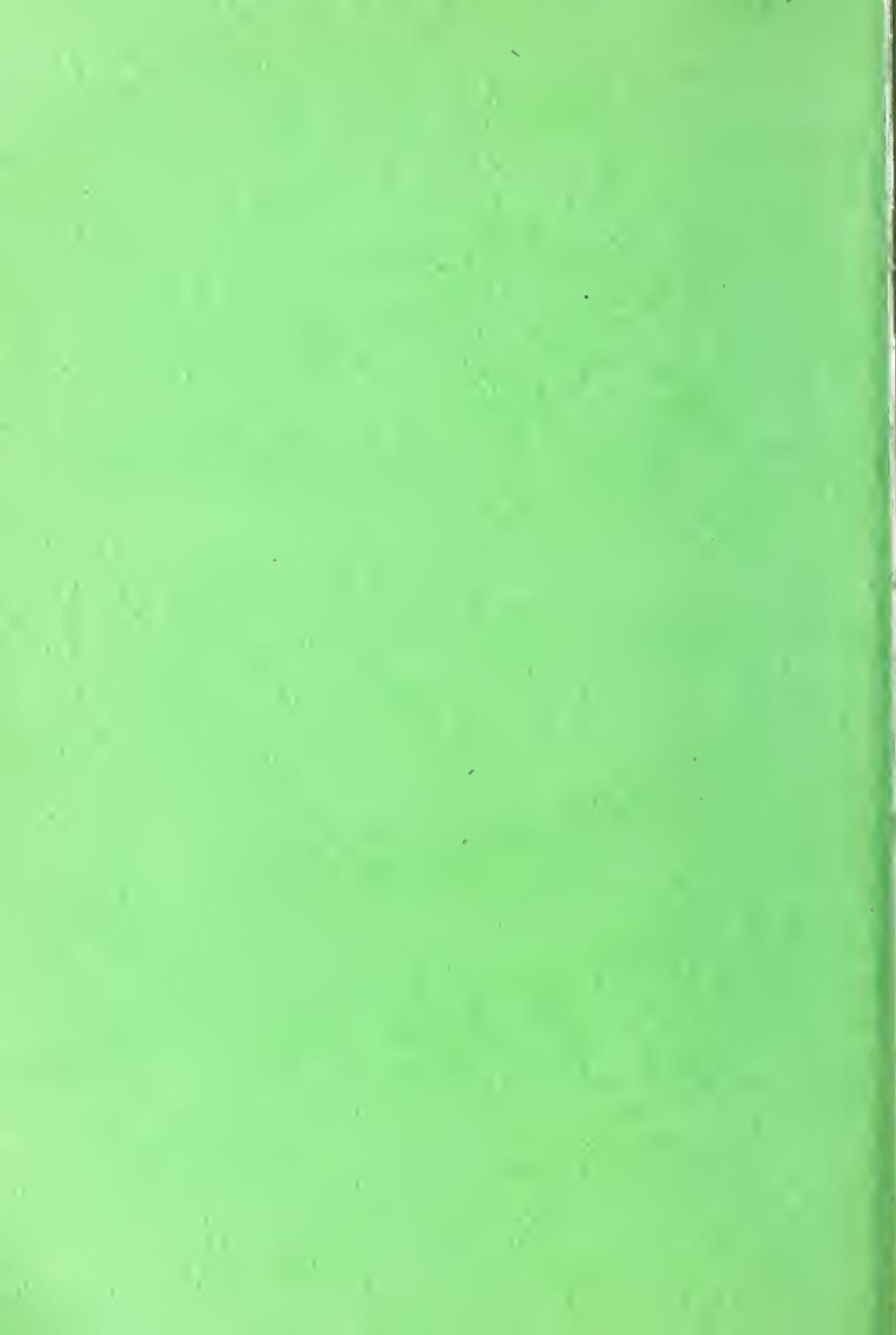
GOING TO RIDE ON A PLEASANT SUMMER AFTERNOON

Printed by Newcomb & Gauss Co.

in City Hall Square, Salem, Mass.

for the

Salem Books Co., M. F. McGrath, President



# OLD SALEM SCRAP BOOK

No. 2

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FRED A. GANNON

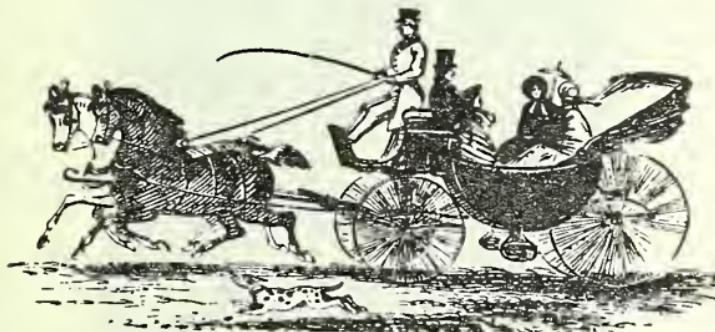
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Horse and Buggy Sayings

The Steam Wagon

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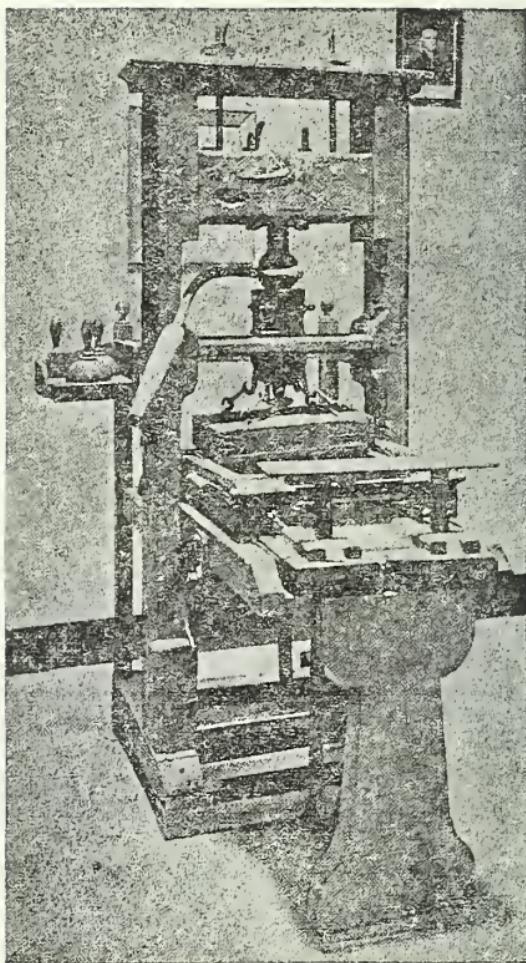
GOING TO RIDE ON A PLEASANT SUMMER AFTERNOON

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SAMUEL HALL USED A PRINTING PRESS LIKE  
THIS WHICH WAS USED BY ISIAH THOMAS  
IN WORCESTER

Courtesy of The Essex Institute

## HORSE AND BUGGY SAYINGS IN OLD SALEM

Words change with wagons. Each new mode of travel brings its new mode of speech. Sayings of horse and buggy days, familiar to old timers, may be strangers to youngsters of modern traffic.

Words are symbols of changes in American life, like flint lock muskets, grandfather clocks, women's shoes and men's hats. We offer a few sayings of the good old (and dusty) horse and buggy days.

"Git up" started the horse. "Whoa" stopped him.

Now we "step on the starter" and say nothing, unless the engine doesn't turn over.

One talked to a horse, and gave him a lump of sugar. But who gives an apple to the engine, or talks to the car,—or to a traffic officer?

"Gee" turned the horse. We said "haw" to the ox. The equine had a "nigh" side, also an "off side." Now "off side" is of football.

"Hold your horses! The elephants are coming." That was the cry on circus day.

Alas and Alack! Circus parades are no more. Some freight trucks are as big as elephants.

"Stop, Look & Listen" said the warning sign at the railroad crossing.

“Red Light” is the sign on the motor car boulevard.

“Sunday drivers” troubled Dr. Bentley, pastor of the East church, in 1811.

“In the Devil’s chariot there they go” exclaimed a cleric of 1911 as he saw his flock motoring to the woods instead of sitting in the pews.

“Get along” said the driver to urge his horse to speed.

Now the chauffeur “steps on the gas” to accelerate the car.

“Going to ride” was said when one climbed into the buggy for a leisurely journey on an afternoon.

“Joy ride” is the term for the motor trip over a week end.

The horse was “a hay motor.” The auto is “the gas buggy,” “the kerosene car,” “the flivver” or “the boat” though its not aquatic yet.

“You can lead a horse to water but you can’t make him drink.” So it was said of an effort made in vain.

“Like putting the cart before the horse” was said when things were wrong end to.

“Like locking the door after the horse was stolen” was remarked of happenings that followed lack of caution.

The wrastrel, of horse and buggy days, "sewed his wild oats."

His successor "burns up the gas."

The ancestors of both "trotted on shank's mare."

A nightmare is a bad dream, often due to digestion kicking up—but not as painful as a kick from a horse, or a mule.

Who has met the man "as stubborn as a mule?" or, he who "laughed like a horse?"

"A horse. A horse. My kingdom for a horse" exclaimed the thespian Shakespearian.

"A coach and four" was a dream of affluence. Its counterpart is "two cars in one garage."

The farmer looked at the good horse and said "he's worth his oats."

"Don't change horses in the middle of the stream" was of farmers' wisdom. It's a slogan of politics.

"Between hay and grass" was the equivalent of betwixt and between—sometimes "between Satan and the sea."

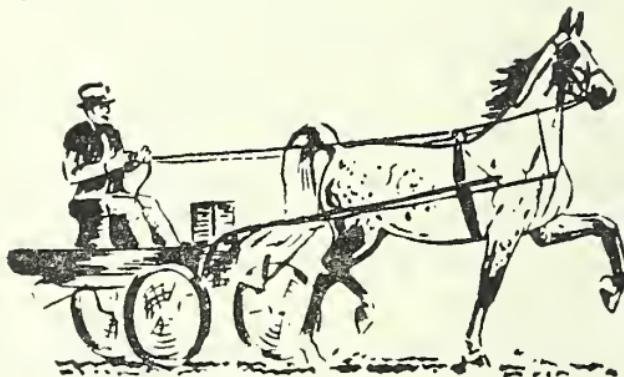
"The horse goes steady by jerks" said the farmer as Old Dobbin jogged along at variable speeds.

"The car has got the jitters" exclaimed the chauffeur as the automobile went along with a wheeze, a rattle and a tremor.

"Show him your heels" said the driver of the trotter as he drove his fast steed by the plodder.

"We'll give him our dust" said the operator of the racing car as he passed the auto that was just rambling along.

"Back seat driver" is a familiar remark, sometimes apt, and again not so apt.



A KNIGHT OF THE REINS DRIVES A FAST STEPPER

The farmer, in like circumstances said—"Two heads are better than one, even if one is a sheep's head."

"As frisky as a colt" was said of a gay young person.

"As big as a horse" was remarked of the young giant.

"It fits like a horse collar" said the man who bought the coat too big.

"He stands without hitching" was remarked of a steady going person not likely "to kick over the traces."

"He has horse sense" was the comment on a person of level head.

"As big as a barn door" was an expression for large size.

"Don't look a gift horse in the mouth." That meant not to be too critical of the birthday cigars or necktie.

A youngster of motor car days, put it "Don't look a gift horse in the face."

The automobile dealer "always looks under the hood."

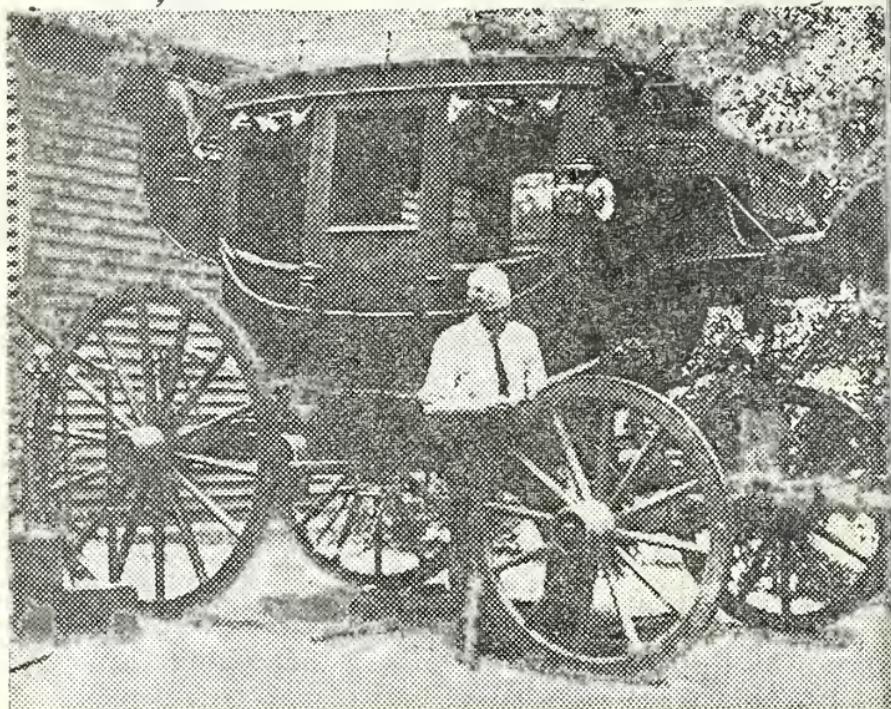
"As sharp as a hoss trader" often was said in days of old.

"The junk dealer" is the term that's applied to the dealer who sold the motor car that didn't turn out to be what he said it was.

"A plug" was a horse old and decrepit. Now "a plug" is "a boost" which some take to be a bid for popularity.

"The horse has cast his shoe" So it was said. And some people picked up the shoe for luck.

"Flat tire" is now exclaimed when the rubber shoe "blows out." Hard luck. But nobody picks up an automobile shoe as a token of fortune's favor.



FIXING A TIRE IN STAGE COACH TIMES

To see a red headed girl driving a white horse was a sign of luck almost as good as picking up a horse shoe.

"For want of a nail the race was lost." Those were words of caution.

"For lack of oil the engine over heated." So goes the modern saying.

"Give the horse his reins and he'll find the way home." The old saying was of the horse sense age. "Out of gas" is the motor car excuse for not getting home on time.

"Food for man and beast" was the sign that the hospitable landlord put on his tavern.

"Hot dogs" is the sign on the road side stand of the present.

"Distance lends enchantment to the view" said the rider in the horse and buggy.

The descriptive circulars of this touring age laud the landscape to the limit. But who sees it when going a mile a minute?

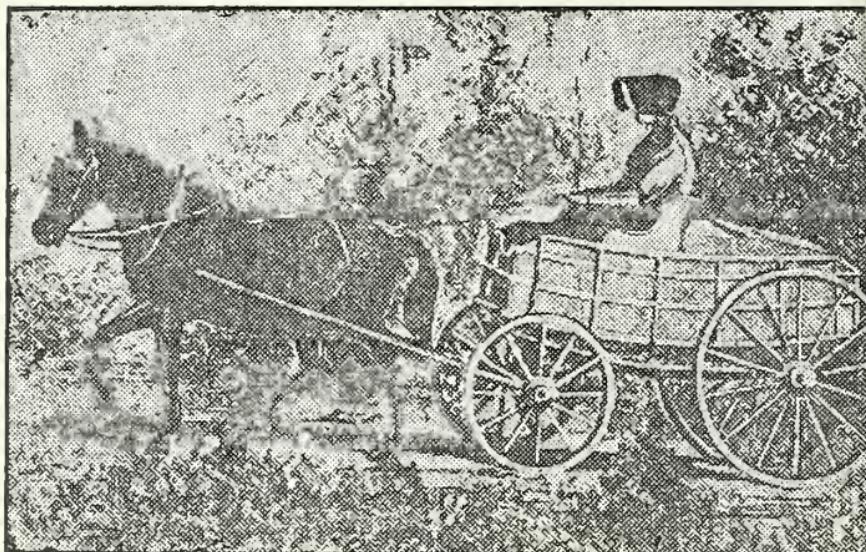
"Jingle bells. Jingle bells." That was the refrain of the song of the sleigh ride—also of the college glee club.

"Honk the horn" may be the song of the motor car. Who sings when speeding in an automobile?

"Old Dobbin" was a common name for horses. There was a thousand and one others.

Beach wagons have their names, and so do airplanes. But no motor vehicle comes when called by name as does a horse.

Fisherman caught the horse mackerel, which isn't a sea horse. The fishermen and sportsmen now catch the tuna which is the old horse mackerel by a new name.



A PEACEFUL RIDE ALONG A PLEASANT ROAD

Horse liniment was "good for man and beast." At least some kinds were.

"Horse doctor" was a proper term for a medical man who treated four footed beasts, but wasn't proper to the doctor who treated the two footed animal.

The newspapers keep on using "horse" and here and there are men who applied themselves to "the saw horse."

"Thank you marms." When the buggy bounces over a hole in the highway, the driver, or passenger, exclaimed "thank you, marm."

"Frost heaves." When Jack Frost came out of the pavement, after long winter, he sometimes raised pillow like elevations on the surface. These were called "frost heaves."

"He drives like a sailor." That was often remarked of the awkward driver. Also "he rides like a sailor."

"A sewing horse." The saddler, or other stitcher of stout leather, including legs of boots, held his leather in clamps while he sewed his seams. The clamp were fitted to a horse, and the device was called "a sewing horse."

"Like locking the barn door after the horse was stolen"—a lack of precaution. "Safety first" is the modern version.

The Boys of horse and buggy days knew the traces, the hames, the bridle, the collar, the surcingle and the whip stock, and the several parts of the buggy, the democrat wagon, the hay rick and the hack, also the brougham.

The lads of today know the piston, the differential and the carburetor, also the fender and speedometer, and the multitude of devices of the traffic lights.

So words change with wagons, parts and appurtenances. We now end the story of horse and buggy words "put it out to pasture."



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FIRE! FIRE! THE PRANCING STEEDS ANSWER AN ALARM

## CAPTAIN DERBY AND THE FIRST PRINTING PRESS

“Next,” said the Talkative Guide to the Inquisitive Visitor, “we’ll walk along old Derby street, and see the house that Captain Richard Derby built.”

“Now, here we are. A handsome house, and a credit to craftsmen of 1762, is it not?”

“Having seen it, inside and out, we’ll sit ourselves here, and look along old Derby wharf and over the harbor, while I tell you of Captain Derby and the first printing press.”

“Perhaps the story will explain to you in part how you are now here as you are in the land of the free enterprise.”

“The Derbys, you know, owned many ships and traded with many ports, competing with English and French ships in the commerce of the ocean.”

“The English seized Salem ships and impressed Salem seamen. Captain Derby didn’t like it. He believed in freedom of the seas, also, freedom for the colonies.”

“By what chance Captain Derby bought a printing press, I know not. The circumstances would be well worth knowing, for it was an important event in the history of the nation, as my story will show.”

“Samuel Hall, the young man who managed this

press, learned the trade of printer, and editor, from the Franklins, of whom Benjamin was the wisest."

"This Hall published The Essex Gazette, starting in 1768. It was a small paper of but four sheets, and a great wonder to Salem folks who read a home town newspaper for the first time. Maybe later, we'll look at a copy of it in The Essex Institute."

"The Gazette, in 1775 printed a story, about a column long, and on an inside page, about the battle of Lexington. Col. Timothy Pickering wrote it. I speak of him as the first pioneer American war correspondent."

"Captain Richard read the story and told his son, Captain John, to get some copies of the Gazette and carry them to England as fast as ever he could drive a ship."

"Captain John sailed the little Quero across the ocean in 29 days, passing the big Sukey of the British navy that had a four days start over him."

"He delivered copies of the Gazette to friends of America in London, and swift spread news of the battle of Lexington. The stock market crashed. The Tories trembled. The brass hats said that the news couldn't be true. They asked the public to await the official despatches from Gen. Gage. When they tardily arrived they were compared with the story in the Gazette. The verdict was that the newspaper

had the true story of the famous battle, and the opinion was that the patriots had started to fight for freedom and independence.”

“Perhaps you may call Derby’s feat a diplomatic victory. It was also an instance of the power of the free press, then a new institution.”

“Captain John Derby sailed the little Quero back to this harbor, before you. He brought news from London, which he delivered to Washington at Cambridge.”

“It was also the fortune of Captain Richard to bring from France the news that a treaty of peace had been signed at Paris, and that by its terms the colonies had won liberty to shape their destiny according to their wisdom.”

“So, you see, this house in which Captain Derby built in 1762 is one of the cradles of the nation. As for the press that he set up in Salem, it was a beginning of the journalism which keeps us informed of the world and its ways.”

“With your permission, I’ll add a word for young Samuel Hall, a founder of American journalism.”

“In telling of his plans, he said he purposed to ‘print items of the most useful knowledge to mankind, tending to preserve and promote the liberty, happiness and welfare of civil society.’ ”

“He added a line about publications that—‘greatly tend to perpetuate the inestimable privilege of thinking what we please and speaking what we think.’”

“You may find the story in detail, in Salem Imprints, which was written in 1927, by Harriet Sylvester Tapley.”

“So I conclude my story of Captain Derby and the first printing press.”



## OLD SALEM STEAM WAGON

A summer day of the gay nineties, Frank Cook drove a steam wagon along the dusty streets, and old Salem saw its first horseless carriage.



FRANK COOK DRIVING SALEM'S FIRST HORSELESS CARRIAGE

He steamed to the cattle show in Peabody. Farmers left their horses and oxen and ran to see the new wonder. Later, some bought trucks and tractors.

At six miles an hour the wagon wheeled over city pavements. "Go no faster than a horse" said the chief of police.

Old Dobbin snorted when the steam wagon came along. Young Bingo, the colt, kicked up her heels, and headed for the woods.

"A carriage without horses goes. Mother Shipton's prophecy has come true at last," so the old folks exclaimed.

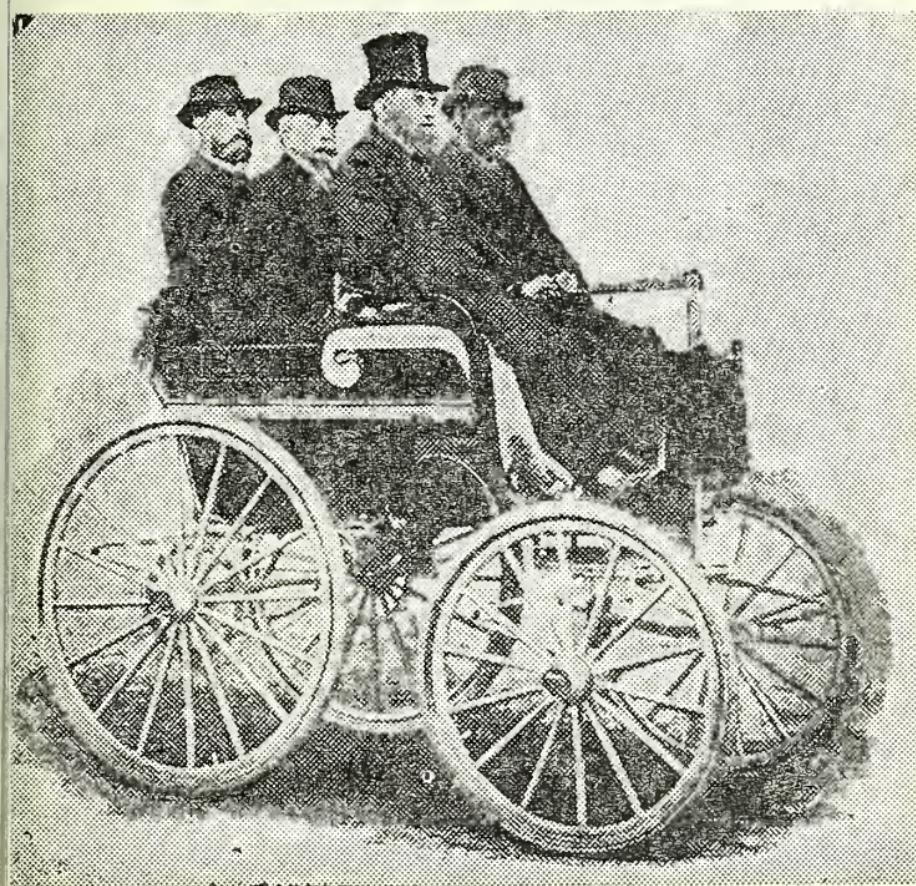
Hon. David M. Little built this steam wagon in his boat shop on a Salem wharf. The idea not original with him.

Nathan Read, the old Salem apothecary, invented "a land carriage" to be driven by "a portable steam boiler" soon after the Revolution. He built and operated a steamboat before Fulton.

As for electricity, Col. David Mason, soldier of the French and Indian wars, experimented with that magic. He was an ancestor of Hon. David Mason Little, builder of the steam wagon of the gay nineties.

Maybe mechanics of today could build a steam wagon, as did Mr. Little. Some of them have built little locomotives which they run on tracks behind Lester Friend's box factory in Danvers.

This first steam wagon in old Salem had a little engine, of one cylinder, 2 x 4 in., a boiler of many



A GENTLEMAN TAKES HIS FRIENDS TO RIDE IN A "STEAMER" OF 1896

tiny tubes, a gasoline burner, and one tank of ten gallons of gasoline to make heat, and another of 30 gallons of water to make steam. A match started the flame to getting up steam. The driver opened the throttle to start the engine, steered it with the left lever, reversed it with the right, and put his foot on the brake to slow down and to stop. On the open road the vehicle steamed along at 35 miles an hour. Not a traffic officer in sight, nor a stage coach, or a traffic signal. The flag in the whip socket an emblem of American freedom, to be sure.

Others of the period experimented with motor transportation. Lucius Packard, wheelwright, built a horseless carriage. Joseph Foster, stage mechanic of old Mechanic Hall, designed a flying machine and Zina Goodell built it. Some say it actually hopped up from Crocker & Brown's tan yards where it was tested.

Old Salem saw its first steam wagon in the gay nineties. Now thousands of automobiles dart along its streets, while overhead airplanes fly. Maybe for Bangor, or London or New Zealand.

Who remembers the steam calliope?

### “POP GOES THE WEASEL”

Youngsters of the gay nineties often sang with glee the melody of “Pop Goes The Weasel.” Some made up lines to fit the music. All chorused with enthusiasm the words, “Pop Goes The Weasel.”

When grandmother was a girl, and went to dances in old Hamilton Hall, or perhaps to a party, she joined in singing a song like this:—

“Queen Victoria’s very sick, Napoleon’s got the measles

Sebastapool is won at last. Pop goes the weasel.  
All around the cobbler’s house the monkey chased  
the people

And after them in double haste Pop went the  
Weasel.”

When the night walks in as black as sheep  
And the hen and her eggs are fast asleep  
When in to her nest a serpent creeps, Pop goes the  
Weasel.

Of all the dance that ever was plann’d  
To galvanize the heel and hand  
There’s none so gay as Pop goes the Weasel.”

## SCHOOL MASTER'S WIT

The school master, not too serious, sent the school boy to the library for the book about Adam's grandfather.

## HAWTHORNE'S EXPLANATION

An inquisitive man asked Hawthorne, soon after "The Scarlet Letter" was published, if he really found the letter in the old Custom house.

Hawthorne looked him in the eye and said:—"Well, I did have it. But one Sunday, when I and my wife were at church, the children found it and burned it up."

## COLLECTOR'S LUCK

Ephriam Miller walked along Derby street on his way to the U. S. Custom House where his father had his office as Collector of the Port of Salem. Gen. James Miller, the collector, was "The Hero of the Battle of Lundy's Lane."

As he walked along Ephriam saw a woman brushing a rug in her yard. He stopped, looked at the rug, and said "A handsome rug, is it not?" The lady replied. "It's handsome, sir. But it's too large for our parlor." Ephriam looked with increasing admiration, and remarked "It's a very handsome rug." The lady agreed and then told in a neighborly way, it being that the Millers lived nearby—"My husband brought it home as a souvenir of his first voyage. He bought it in an old shop in Malta. It's handsome, as you say, but it's too large for our parlor." Ephriam looked once more at the rug and said—"If you'll let me have the rug, you may have a carpet to fit your parlor. Go to Mr. Downing's store, and chose any carpet you wish, tell Mr. Downing to send the bill and I'll step into Mr. Downing's store and pay for it."

Ephriam carried the rug to the Custom House where it was spread in Gen. Miller's office, and admired by all who saw it. The legend, according to Miss Silsbee's "Half a Century In Old Salem," is that the rug was identified as a tapestry of the Raphael "Feed My Sheep" design, and that it was sold to a cathedral in Canada.

#### THE DEACON'S PECULIARITY

Deacon Henry Morton sold shoes. Deacon Asa Hood sold hats. They met on Essex street one day, and talked of trade and men.

"Remember," Deacon Morton, said the hatter, "all men have their peculiarities."

To this Deacon Morton replied—"Indeed, I have no peculiarities."

The hatter said "And that Deacon Morton, is your peculiarity."

#### EARTH SHOOK. HOOPS SHRUNK

Of an early earthquake an elder penned these brief lines:—

"Greater than ever before known here was the earthquake of 1755.

"Bells jangled.

"Clocks stopped.

"Chimneys toppled.

"Stone walls tumbled.

"The timid trembled.

"Some hurried to church.

"One strange consequence was a reduction in the circumference of hoops worn by ladies."

#### OLD SALEM GLACIER

A glacier glided over old Salem 50,000 years and more ago, leaving huge boulders here and there, and making great marks on the ledges of Mack part, as proof of the vast and uncontrollable powers of nature.

## THE TOWN GUNNER

Samuel Sharp was town gunner near 300 years ago. He lived by the fort, and had charge of its weapons, whatever they may have been. The fort was westerly of Town House Square, perhaps between the present Y. M. C. A. and the old Witch House.

## AN \$8 BILL

"Lost—Near Stearn's store, an \$8 bill. Finder may have \$2 of it." Salem advertisement of 1803.

## ELECTRIC LAMPS

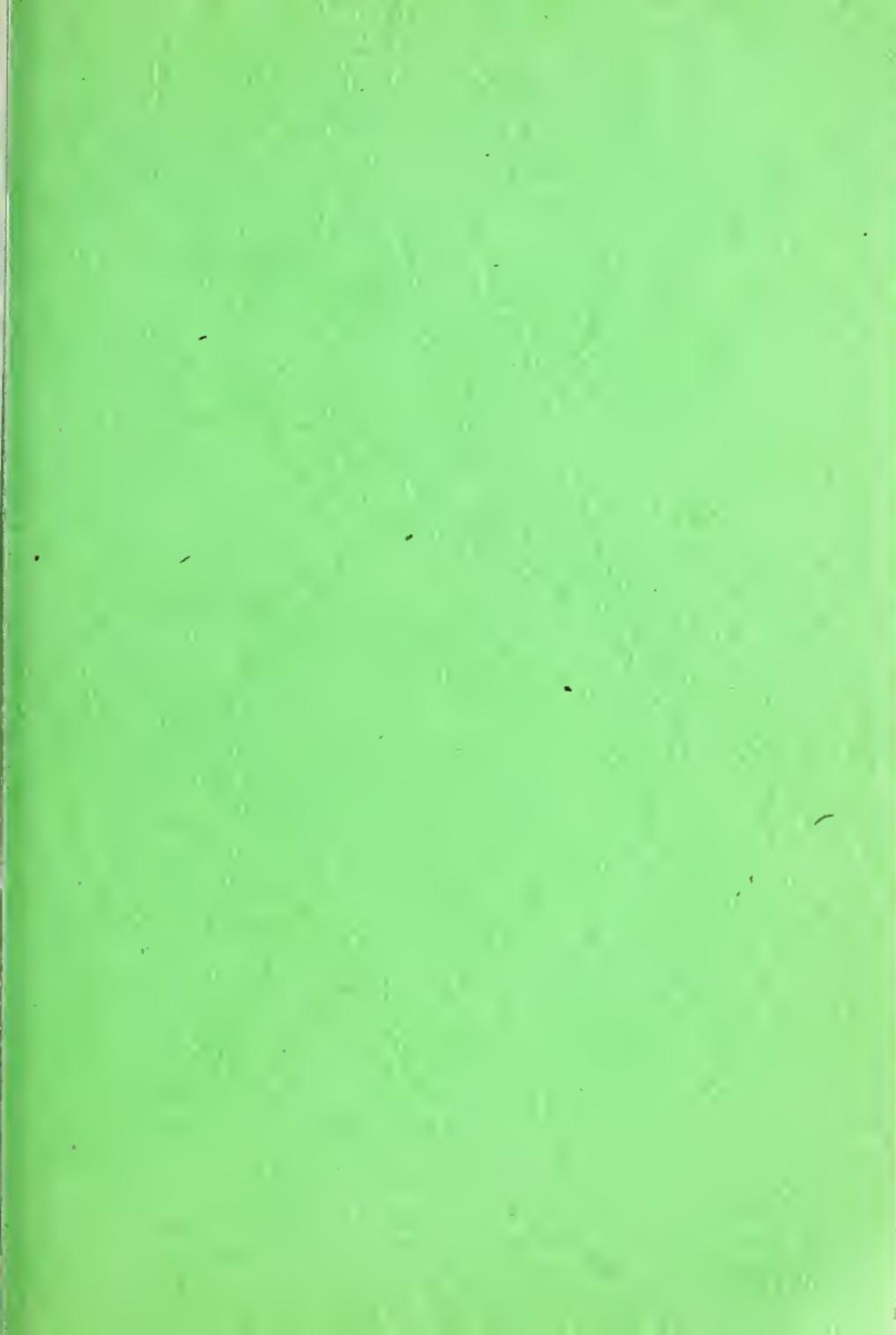
Prof. Moses Farmer lighted an electric lamp, on battery current, in his house on Pearl street in about 1850, and people came from far and wide to look upon the new wonder.

Salem's streets were lighted by electricity for the first time on the evening of Dec. 20, 1881. The electricity was generated in the new station of the Salem Electric Light Co. then new. They "burned with great brilliancy" and crowds turned out to look upon this new wonder.

Now Sylvania and Hytron make millions of electric lamps and tubes.



## A FOOT NOTE





# OLD SALEM SCRAP BOOK

## No. 3

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FRED A. GANNON

---

Ye Honorable Boarde  
Signs and Portents  
First Elephant Boy  
Miscellany



SIGN OF "THE WITCH CITY"

Printed by Newcomb & Gauss Co.  
in City Hall Square, Salem, Mass.  
for the  
Salem Books Co., M. F. McGrath, President



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## YE HONORABLE BOARDE

Let's turn time back to the happy nineties, and join with Ye Honorable Boarde at supper, and in "the flow of soul and feast of reason" that followed after.

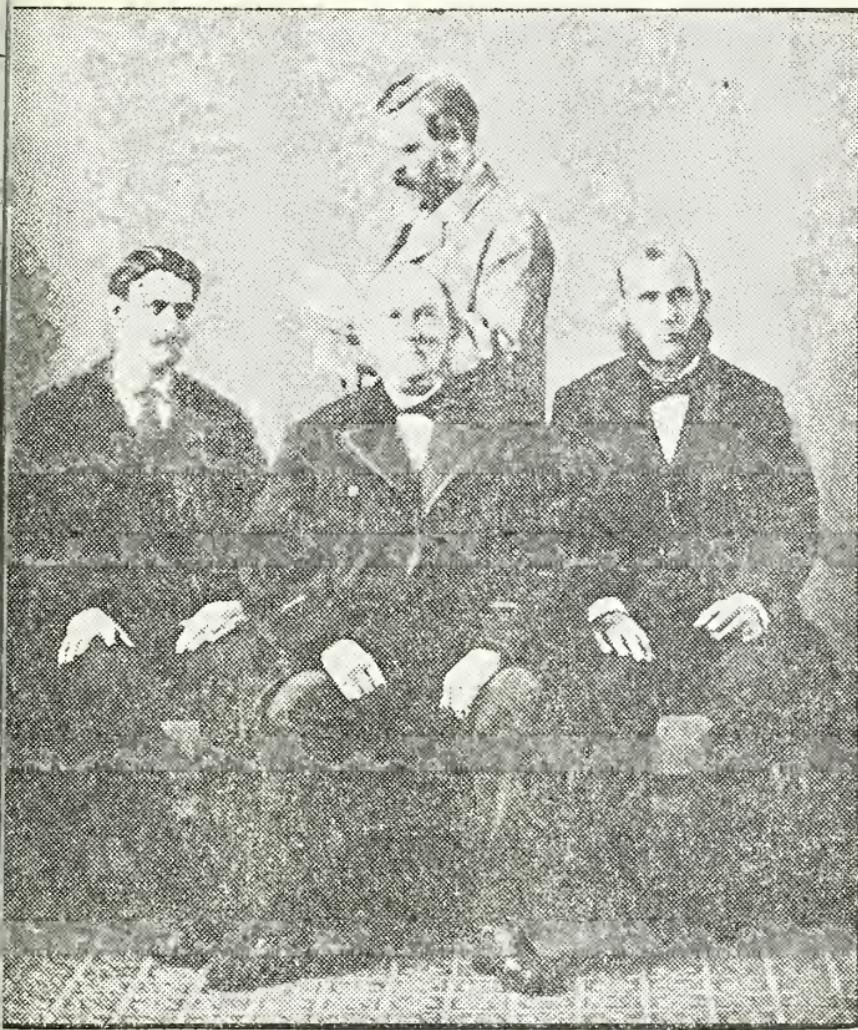
A program, saved from time's wreckage, tells us of today about the good cheer, sparkling wit and stirring music of the occasion.

"Here shall we meet, and here good cheer afford,  
And sing thy praises, O, Illustrious Boarde."



After this spirited salutation came "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," with the admonition—"Let every man sing as he never sang before."

"May the hinges of Ye Boarde's hospitality never creak."



#### OFFICERS OF YE HONORABLE BOARDE

William D. Dennis, *Perpetual Secretary*—Seth Currier,  
*Chief Justice*—Perry Collier, *Perpetual President* seated  
from left to right;—James M. Mulhig, *Chancellor of the  
Ex-Chequer*, standing.

So spoke the members as they sat down to supper—  
always supper, the good old Yankee term, and never  
banquet.

“The Committee of the Interior” reported, and  
presented the vast array of food at \$1 per ticket.

“Let’s strive mightily, but eat as friends.”

That was for “rivals in business,” and those who  
“fought tooth and nail” in politics. “Happy we be  
here together eating and talking.”

With each course an apt line, from the classics,  
or local learning—

“I smell it, upon by life it will do.”

That for food of sweet odor. And for a dish per-  
haps not so appetizing, the line—

“I would rather have a handful of split peas.”

With the pies the line—

“May we never be done so much as to make us  
crusty.”

And with the coffee—

“Take a cup for ould lang syne.”

“The Cook in Ordinary and Purveyor in Extra-  
ordinary” was haled before Ye Honorable Boarde,  
and his praises were sung.

Then the report of the committee on speakers  
rated, in the wise and witty nineties, as more im-  
portant than the report of The Committee on the  
Interior.

"I wonder if the Lion be to speak. No wonder, my lord, one Lion may, when many asses do."

After that preliminary, the chairman exclaimed: "O, for a Forty parson power."

And later reminded the speakers of the rule—

"Board limit 10 minutes. Extra charge for overtime."

And to harass the lawyer, the chairman repeated the conundrum—

"Why is a lawyer like a restless sleeper? Because he is first on one side and then on the other."

And for the final sparkle of wit the line—

"O, there has been such a throwing about of brains."

Then the song—"There are smiles that make us happy," and, last of all and with patriotic fervor—"My Country, 'tis of thee,

Sweet land of liberty."

So it was with wise and witty men of the happy nineties.

Alas, and Alack! The like of them will not be seen again.



### “WHY IS A HEN”

“Dick” Larrok, “The Silent Cobbler” sat on his bench mending shoes. Arguments of his friends, loitering in his shop, annoyed him. So up he spoke, and said:—

“I’ve a question for you to argue over.”

“What may it be,” asked one.

“Why is a hen?” said “Dick.”

The question, which is wisest never answered, become the slogan of Ye Honorable Boarde.

### SIGNS AND PORTENTS

Do you believe in signs and portents?

The answer doesn’t matter.

The chances are nine in ten that in the morning you will look at signs of the weather—

And take care not go out without your umbrella.



Later, walking to work, if you should spy a penny, you’ll pick it up for luck—or a horse shoe.

At noon, if 13 are counted round the lunch table, would you stay and eat, or depart?

And what of being the third to light a cigarette

from one match? Or under a ladder? Or across the path of a black cat?

At the evening card game does the luck run north and south, or east and west? Why does the opponent hold all the good cards?

While strolling an evening walk, do you look at the new moon over the right or the left shoulder as a sign of money to come to your pocket?

Or to see if the new moon be wet or dry? Or for your lucky star?

If the good night glimpse into the mirror discovers another gray hair or two, do you remark that "Gray is becoming," or quote that "Gray cools heads once given to hot contention?"

Do you sleep north of south, or east and west? Seamen of old Salem slept head to the North Pole so as to pick up its magnetic currents.

If you go fishing, do you carry a token of luck?



Do we believe in signs and portents? Or do we not?

## BIRDS AS SIGNS

We look for the first robin as a sign of spring.  
The old New England custom, you know.

Shadowy is the reputation of the ground hog as  
a weather forecaster, is it not?

Geese flying south are a sign of winter beyond  
a doubt.

The crow of the rooster signals the coming of



dawn—the alarm clock down on the farm.

The caw of the crow may be a sign of a storm—  
or a signal from a scout that breakfast is ready way  
down yonder in the corn field.

What of the wisdom of the owl? How is it that  
the birds know as much as they do?

## SIGNS SENTIMENTAL

Grandmother picked a four leaf clover, as did her  
grandmother. So does sweet 16 of today.

What high hopes of the maid who catches the  
bride's bouquet?

Isn't it true that the bride wears something blue—  
And that rice and confetti is thrown upon her for  
luck?

What son of old Erin would not kiss the Blarney  
stone—or a pretty lass?

How long since anybody has seen "a true lover's  
knot," even on Valentine's day?

Actors keep old shoes for luck—and on life's stage  
every man plays his part.

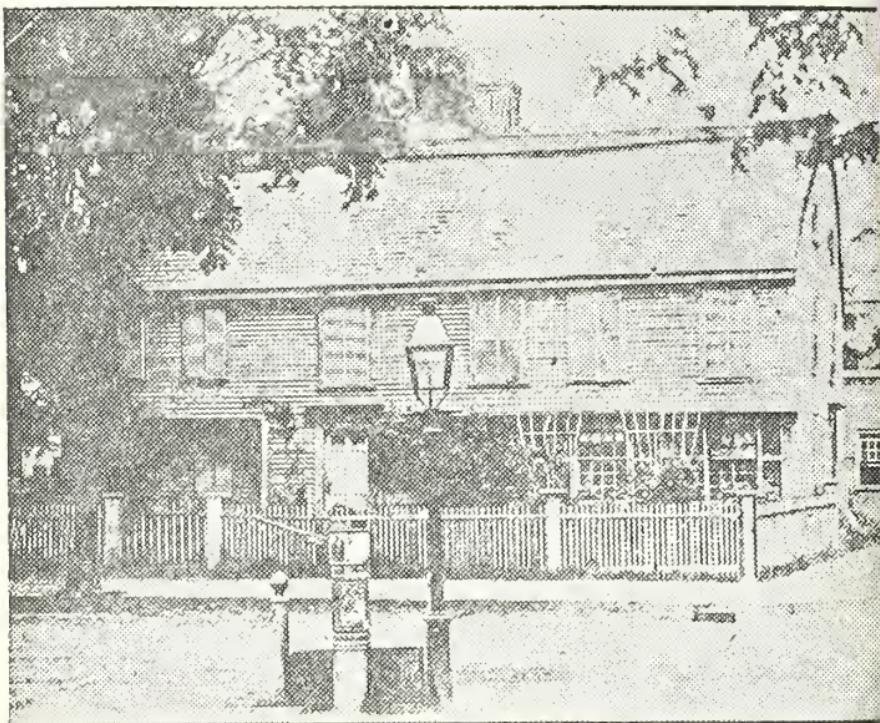


### DOOR SIGNS

All good citizens put their names, and street numbers on their doors, as tokens of good will, also, to save time and trouble for the postman.

Who remembers the "Welcome" sign on door mats of years not long gone?

A pineapple, carved from wood, above the door was a sign of hospitality in old Salem homes.



A bunch of grapes, also of wood, was a sign of hospitality at the tavern. "Shall I not take mine ease at mine inn"—a familiar sign in old time taverns.

The Witch House In Gas Lamp Years. Signs were tacked on to the post of the town pump.

A public bulletin board for legal notices is on the side of City Hall. Do you know where?

A clergyman, of good wit, put a sign "The Grind-  
ery" on the door of his study,—and on the guest  
room of his home a sign "Saint's Rest."

A button, perhaps carved from "whale ivory" once  
was placed by the door when the house was com-  
plete, and the bills all paid. One in the Pingree  
house.

#### WHAT ABOUT THESE?

Who reads dream books—or goes to the astrologer,  
the fortune teller, the palm reader—or she who read  
the leaves in the bottom of the tea cup?

Who says, when the motor car balks, "the grem-  
lyns have got into the engine." The pesky creatures  
also get into typewriters, and mince pies, do they  
not? Also newspapers and tax returns.

The world has changed its ways, but has it  
changed its luck?

The watch charm vanished when the time keeper  
was transferred from the vest pocket to the wrist.

Don't neglect the traffic signs.

Who seeks the smiles of Lady Luck? Who's  
afraid of The Jinxes?



## THE \$ SIGN



Trade goes by the sign of the dollar, also by the worth of the trade mark on goods.

The \$ sign, it's told, was once "U.S." meaning United States currency. Clerks of quill pen times wrote the U. over the S. and, later, cut off the bottom of the U and so had \$.



What's a dollar worth today?

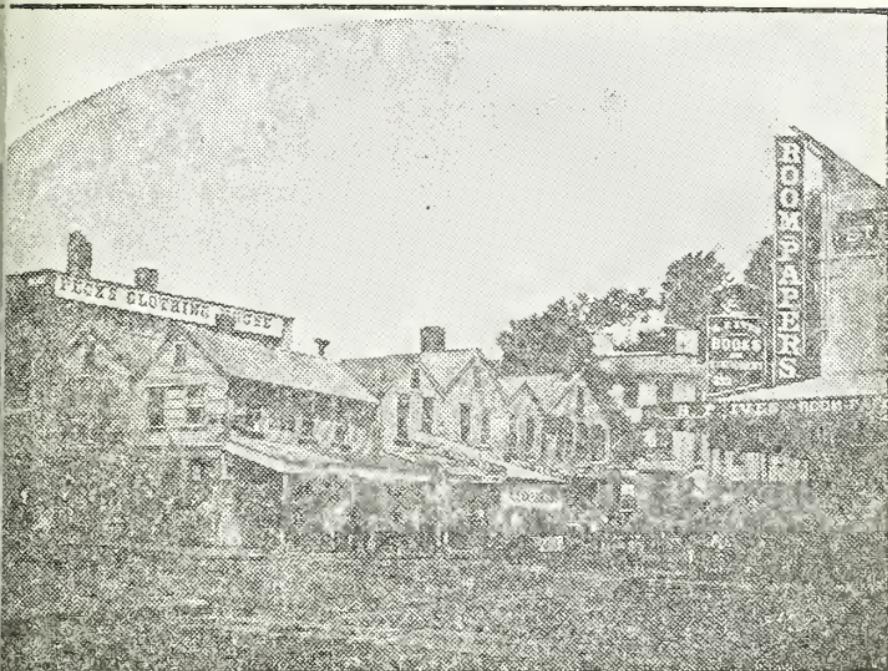
## SIGNS THAT HAVE PASSED

The red head comes merrily along. But where's the white horse? So we ask, remembering that, back in horse and buggy days, to see a red headed girl and a white horse was a sign of good luck.

The fire wagons come racing along, and the ladder truck reminds us that "to see a wagon load of ladder is a sure sign of rain."

'T was told, in kitchen stove times, that—

"If the wife leaves a cover lifter on a hot stove,  
it's a sure sign she'll have a cross husband. But gas  
ranges have no covers, not cover lifter either, and  
so fewer cross husbands.



SKY SIGNS OF OLD TOWN HOUSE SQUARE

"Break a mirror. Shatter your luck." So it was said in years when mirrors were few and far between. Now every vanity case has it's little mirror, for better or worse, usually for the better, is it not?

“See a new moon through glass, and you’ll have bad luck until comes another new moon.”

That’s another old saying—but now, alas and alack, millions now wear spectacles.

### SIGNING OFF

Who has the secret signs of the lodge which are emblems of fellowship and charity?

Or the keys that are signs of scholarship?

Who is not thrilled by national emblem, the sign of patriotism.

Who has knowledge of the mystic signs that are beacons in the mystery of life?

Who is not cheered by the familiar greeting that is a sign of friendship?

Do we believe in signs? Or do we not?

### THE FIRST ELEPHANT BOY

“First time I’ve seen that little elephant,” exclaimed The Talkative Guide to The Inquisitive Visitor, as he pointed to a small stone figure above a door in Peabody Museum.

“Cute little fellow, isn’t he? Must be an idol from India. Folks once worshipped stone images, you know, and had strange notions.

“Some said the world was flat, and rested on the back of an elephant, who stood on a turtle—but what

the turtle stood on nobody told.

"However, I haven't yet figured what keeps this world spinning in space as it does. Have you?"

"Strange to tell," The Guide went on, "that little elephant reminds me of my ancestor Ezra who claimed to be the first elephant boy in America. I'll spin the yard to you as we walk about the Museum.

"Ezra sailed on the American for India in 1798. He was cabin boy—a stout lad of a little more than 12, and in India he helped Capt. Crowninshield to load cargo, including the little elephant that the Captain bought in Bengal.

"On the home voyage, Ezra and the elephant become good friends. Ezra doused the elephant with water in the heat of the tropics. Sometimes the elephant picked up Ezra and swung him in his trunk as if he were rocking him to sleep. As for the elephant he slept leaning up against the mast.

"News that an elephant was on its way spread fast around the old town. Folks flocked to see the wonder like people crowded the streets to see Barnum's circus parade when I was a boy.

"Nobody in America had ever seen an elephant before, excepting sailors who had been to India and Africa. Small boys were thrilled. They told one another how, when they grew up, they were going to be sailors and see the world and its wonders.

“Even the scholarly Dr. Bentley got excited. However, he didn’t neglect to view the elephant, and to make notes about him for the records, which I’ll show you later.

“It was, let me tell you, a great day when the elephant, the first in America, came to town. The young, the old, and the betwixt and between crowded round to see the elephant perform.

“And right in the midst of it was my ancestor Ezra, the first elephant boy in America. However, he counted that no feather in his cap. He said he was only cabin boy for Capt. Crowninshield.

“As for Capt. Crowninshield, Ezra said that though he was captain of a ship, president of a bank and a member of Congress, yet the best thing he did was to bring an elephant to America and make children happy.

“And I suppose,” concluded the Guide, “that making the rising generation wiser, as well as happier, is the best thing a mortal can do.”

#### “LET WELL ENOUGH ALONE”

“Billy” Edwards, a small man, was a powerful mover, as were his father and his grandfather.

These Edwards moved buildings large and small. “Billy” once moved a chimney tall. A wit challenged him to move a well. “Billy” replied—“Let well enough alone.”



## ANECDOTES OF OLD SALEM

“Choose anecdote with caution,  
Tell them with discretion  
To honor, not to smirch, reputation.”

*The Old School Master.*

## THE “SUILL” HAIR CUT

This anecdote comes down from the court records of 1637:—

“John Gatchell is fined ten shillings for bordering (trespassing) upon the Town’s grounds without leave, and in case he shall cut the long hair of his head to a suill (civil) length, shall have abated five shillings of his fine.”

## A BOWDITCH ANECDOTE

Bowditch, the mathematician, early went to sea as did other youth of old Salem. A foe loomed up. The captain, making ready to defend his ship,

ordered young Bowditch to pass powder. "Powder monkey" was the old title.

The captain made the rounds to see that all was ready for a fight. He found young Bowditch sitting on top of one powder keg, and figuring higher mathematics on the head of another keg.

#### EIGHT "JIMS"

In the Newhall family (Lynn branch) eight had the name of James. To tell one from t'other a nickname was bestowed on each, these:—

"President Jim," "Doctor Jim," "Nathan's Jim," "Squire Jim," "Phithisiey Jim," "Silver Jim," and "Increase Jim."

We lack the eighth—perhaps it was plain "Jim."

#### LINES, RHYMES AND RECORDS

Roger Conant, who came over in 1626, looked at the storm and said—

"The biggest snow storm ever I saw."

His Indian friend said—

"We had bigger storms when I was a boy."

#### "SUNDAY WINDOWS"

As late as the gay nineties, storekeepers locked up Saturday night, drew the curtains across their show windows, and kept them there until Monday morning.

## FILENE IN SALEM

William Filene had a store in the Bowker block on Essex Street in 1855. The Filene family lived in a house on Brown Street. In recent years, one of the Filene's, merchants of Boston, visited the old home and said he would give his fortune to hear the rain on the roof as in boyhood.



The anchor, emblem of Seamen of old Salem.



Clark & Friend's trade mark for 50 years.

### “INVEST THE HOURS”

“Take time to read—it’s the source of wisdom.  
“Take time to play—its a way to keep buoyant.  
Take time to look—it’s a means to safety.  
Take time to think—it’s a way to peace.”

*From an old Salem scrap book.*

### SOUP, 10 CENTS

Beef steak—25 cents.  
Oyster stew, 15 cents.  
Soup or chowder, 10 cents.  
Pie or pudding, 5 cents.  
Tea or coffee, 5 cents.

Holly Tree Inn advertisement of 1876.

### THE CLOCK’S EXAMPLE

In side the door of a tall clock that grandfather once wound up are these lines:—

“I serve thee here with all my might  
To tell the time both day and night.  
Therefore example take from me  
And serve thy God with all thy might.”

## A GOOD LISTENER

“I tarried with Mr. Winthrop & amused myself with his rich and engaging conversation on all interesting subjects.”

Dr. Bentley, 1793.

## “SWEET MEMORIES”

“I sometimes fancy that my brain must be brimful of small photographs, such vivid pictures rise to view when I am sitting alone and thinking, as old folks do.”

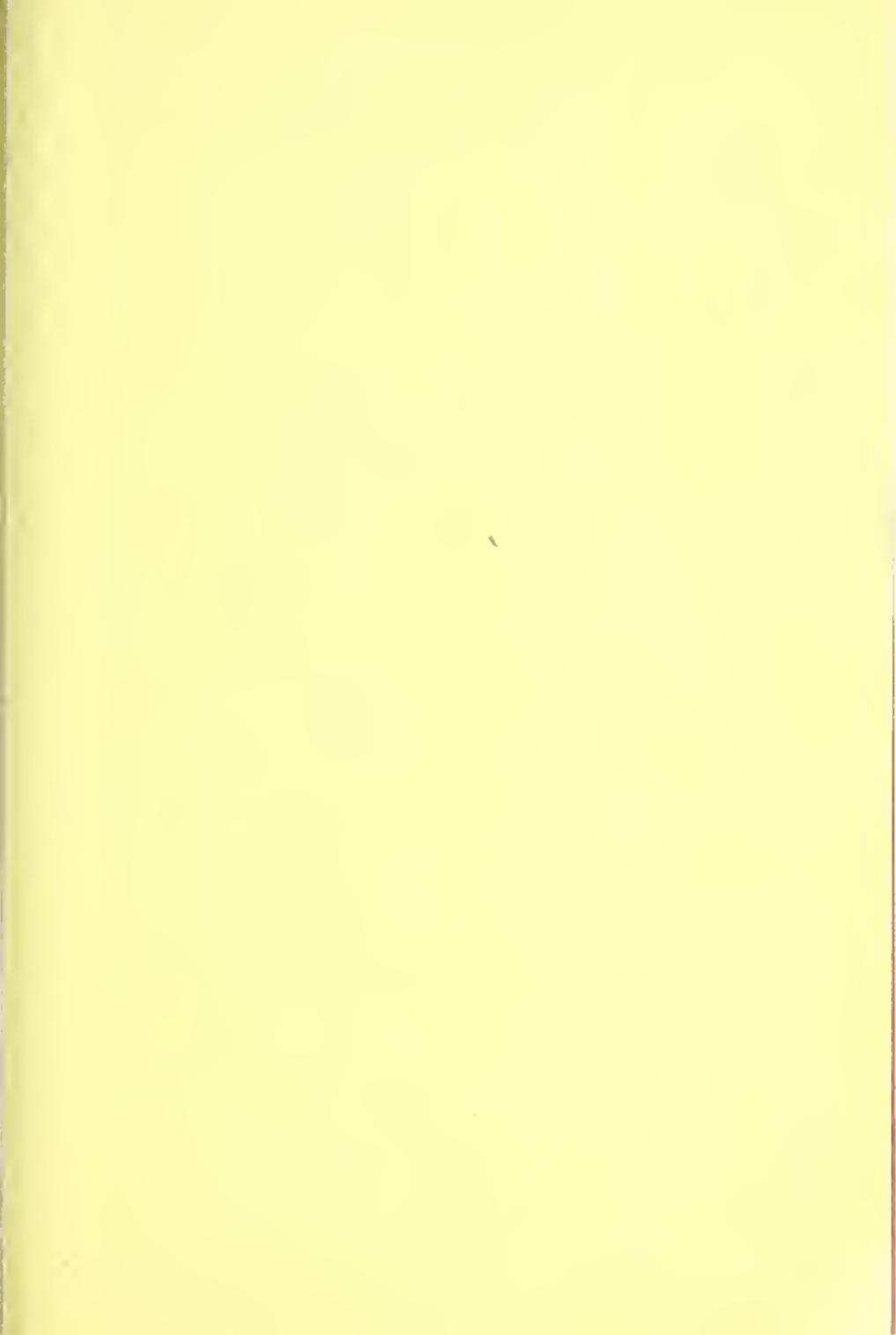
Miss Silsbee













# OLD SALEM SCRAP BOOK

## No. 4

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FRED A. GANNON

---

Our City Hall That Uncle Sam Paid For  
Active Ancients of The Nineties  
The Indian Deed and Miscellany



OLD BAKERY

Printed by Newcomb & Gauss Co.  
in City Hall Square, Salem, Mass.  
for the  
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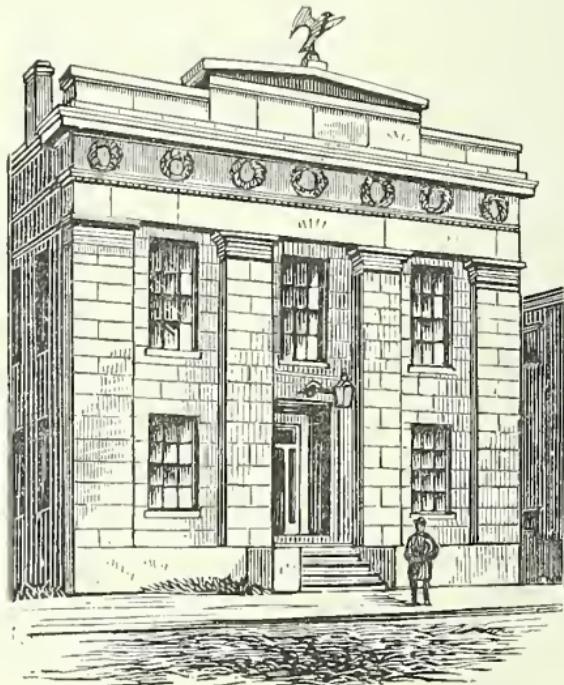


OLD BAKERY

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### OLD SALEM'S CITY HALL

City Hall—the American eagle over the door, and the American flag above—the people's hall.



THE CITY HALL  
THAT UNCLE SAM PAID FOR

Each citizen may seek office in City Hall. It's an American right.

Each citizen may go to City Hall and speak his mind about municipal affairs. It's an American

duty, perhaps more honored in the breach than the observance. Torpid attention to government is a peril to city, state and nation.

To City Hall go citizens to get a license to marry, to record a birth, or death, to obtain a permit to build a house or factory, and to ask about schools, public health, streets, parks, fire departments, etc.

And there's also the task of paying taxes to the city collector so that he may pay the public bills.

In our City Hall are the public records of three centuries, a gallery of portraits of our foremost men and the Indian deed by which the forefathers bought from the Indians, for 50 pounds, all property within the municipal bounds.

Uncle Sam paid for our City hall, when he distributed a surplus of the U. S. treasury. That's unique. It's also unique for the U. S. treasury to have a surplus.

This Hall, built in 1838, is of huge blocks of granite. It looks strong enough to stand for as long as the Pyramids.

But, remember, that the spirit of it will endure for only as long as citizens maintain the ideals of American government.

### THE INDIAN DEED

In our City Hall is The Indian Deed by which the Naumkeags conveyed their real estate to Salem settlement. A sound and lawful document, and one of the oldest of its kind. It's dated 1686.

By it, the Indians transferred to the white men all lands within bounds of the town, and water, too, and all above and all below said land and water.

The price was 50 pounds in English money. It was a lot of cash for those times.



The Indians, going west to live where land was free and vast, sold out to the settlers.

The deed is written on parchment, perhaps is an ancient piece of leather and continues in good condition. It was written with quill pens. But how was made the ink that's clear and legible after 200 years and more?

Some Indians signed their names, and others signed with their marks—not an “X” like the famil-

iar mark of today, but a mark apt and picturesque, like a peace pipe, a samp bowl, a beaver, an eagle or a bow and arrow.

Some of the names were hard to spell. For instance—

Israel Quannophkownatt—

David Nonnuphannohow—

Thomas Vsoyekussennum—

Cicely Pataghuncksq—

Yawata, daughter of Nanapashment, which seems to show that Indian women had rights in property.

When an agent of King James came over, looking for choice pieces of property to claim for the Crown, the settlers said to him:—

“You can not have Salem settlement. The land is ours. We bought it from the Indians and paid them for it.”

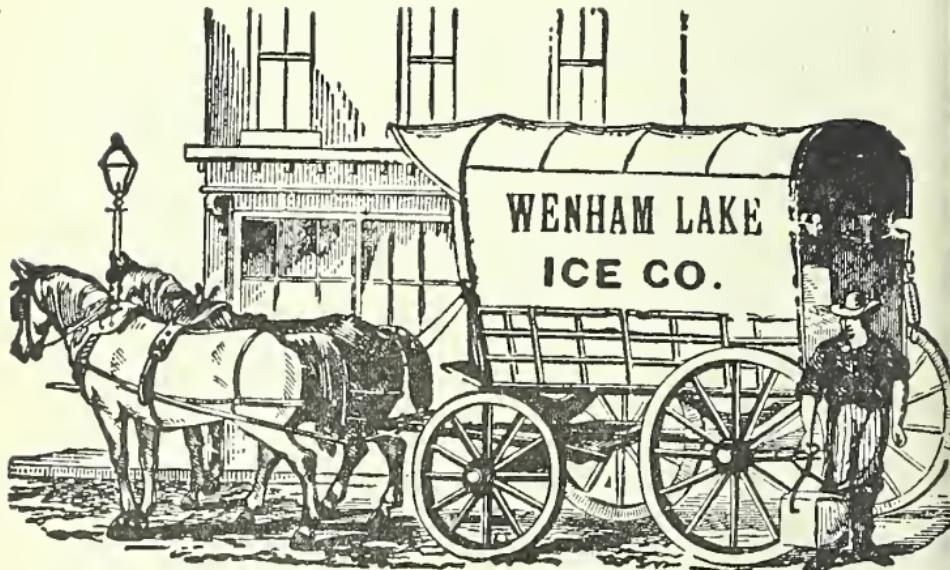
However, it took the War of the Revolution to prove the rights of the ancestors to the property they bought from the Indians, and improvements on it.



## OLD SALEM ICE

“Any ice today?”

Who recalls the cry of the ice man of the gay nineties?



OLD SALEM ICE WAGON OF THE GAY NINETIES

Some asked for a five cent piece, and others for a ten cent piece. The ice man cut it from a big block, brushed it, and washed it, grabbed it with his tongs and carried it to the ice chest in the kitchen.

What a laborious task as compared with the pres-

ent method of turning the switch and cooling the electric ice box to 40, more or less.

Youngsters greeted the ice man, and from the tail of the cart each picked up a chip of ice and put it in the mouth on a hot summer day.

The day before Fourth of July many a house-keeper bought a 25 cent cake of ice, and put it in the wash tub, and later chopped it up for cooling the pitcher of lemonade and freezing two quarts of home made ice cream.

A few of the elders frowned at the Arctic luxury. They recalled the years when the butter, and the milk, were put in the spring, or in the bucket in the well to keep them cool in summer.

As for ice cold drinks, they would have none of them. It was their rule of health to never to drink anything too cold, nor too hot.

Salem folks, of the nineties, had Wenham lake ice, renowned for its purity at home and abroad.

Capt. "Ed" Trumbull, when he saw the ice wagon coming along, sometimes told of how he carried cargoes of Wenham lake ice to India, also to China, and, occasionally, stacked barrels of apples on the ice in the hold of his ship.

## SOME OLD TIMERS LIVED LONG

Looking back to the happy nineties, and thereabouts, it seems as if an uncommon number of persons lived long and enjoyed the experience.

There was, for example, "Grammy" Connery. The reporter, hearing that she was four score, called on her and found her taking a batch of home made bread from the oven. With Irish hospitality she offered the scribe a slice of hot bread and a cup of tea. "Years," she explained, "everybody has years. So why bother about them?" When news arrived that her oldest son in Ireland had died at 80, folks said she "must be a hundred." She lived 106 years, by the birth certificate from Ireland.

There was also Capt. Thomas Fuller who walked about our streets until he was 90 and more. Boys found it hard to believe that the old seaman has put down a mutiny in the China sea, and had survived a piracy in the Carribean.

Some of the mayors lived long, as if to offer examples of good health and longevity to ordinary citizens.

Hon. David P. Waters skated on the old Mill pond after he was 70, as he had every winter since boyhood.

The scholarly Hon. Robert S. Rantoul strode along briskly at 80, in winter wearing knee high boots, stout of sole. In youth, and in like boots, he walked home from Harvard college for week ends.

Hon. James F. Turner, who preferred to be called "Jim," carried on until he was 90 and more. He sometimes, mixing his business of measuring leather and affairs of City Hall, worked 20 hours in a day.

The buoyant Hon. John F. Hurley, at 80, wore his tall silk hat at a jaunty angle, waltzed lightly and commented brightly on polities and the ways of the human race. "Right on deck" was his slogan that kept him going.

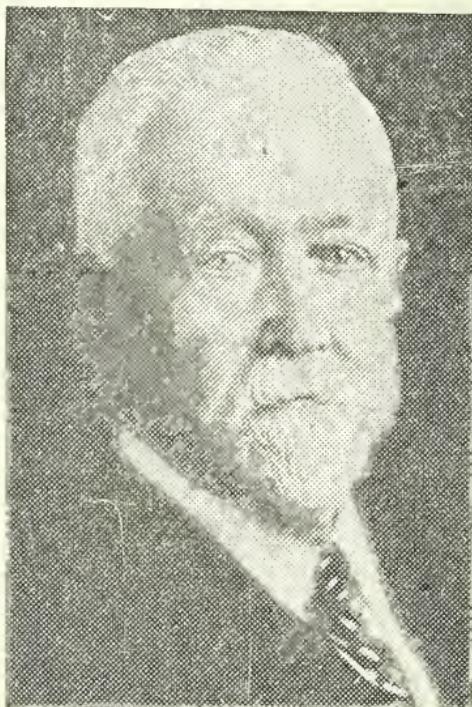
Tanners, too, lived long. Some explained that the smell of bark, used to tan leather up to the nineties, was good for the throat and lungs.

The Salem Senate, chalking down age records on the walls, once made up a list of seven tanners, all active, whose ages averaged 77 years. Is there any record of longevity like that in any trade in this century.

The Salem Senate, a group of elder tanners, met in Joshua B. Grant's store, in Blubber Hollow, where he made tables and tools for tanners. Joshua, as a youth, sailed to California in 1849 to hunt for gold, returned home and for many a year kept his shop,

and then retired to his farm in Ipswich where he lived to be four score and more.

His clerk, Frank Wade, of such sound sense that he was called "The Ipswich Lawyer," also retired



MATTHEW ROBSON  
A Busy Man At 90

to his farm, and the records say that at 90 he "fished, hunted and skated."

On Washington's birthday, in the year of 1923,

Matthew Robson, in honor of his 90th birthday, was greeted by friends and fellow citizens assembled in Ames Hall of the Y.M.C.A. of which he was president.

He was also a leading church man, and a builder of houses of worship, a trustee of the Bertram library, president of Salem hospital, director of Naumkeag Trust Co. and director of American Hide & Leather Co., his years in the leather industry being about 70. He whimsically remarked that he had wondered what a man should do after he was four score and ten, and, after thinking it over, decided to keeping on doing what he had been doing, which he did for four years more.

It seems, looking back to the nineties and thereabouts, that some folks then knew the way to "gently glide down the stream of life." Has the art been lost? If so, how may it be regained.

#### THE BOOK REVIEWER

Col. Benjamin Pickman, soldier and merchant, wrote in his Bible in 1773, he then being 70 and more:—

"I've read this Bible 71 times, and am starting to read it through again."

## OLD SALEM FISH CHOWDER

"The method of making a genuine old Salem fish chowder was many years a family secret" began "Ben" Barrels, the old seaman of the limber tongue.

"There's no harm to be done by telling it now, because the chowder can not be duplicated. We haven't the makings these days, nor the patience to attend to the details of the cooking. That's a consequence of the tin can age. At least, so I think.

"My uncle Abijah was the last of the Barrels family to make a genuine old Salem fish chowder. Listen a while and I'll tell you how he did it.

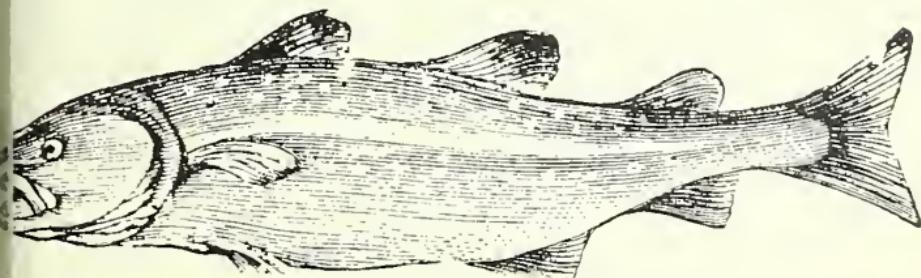
"First, he caught his fish, a thumping big cod, and then, after cleaning him, he put him in the kettle, bones, head and all, added three quarts of water from the spring—not from the faucet, mind you, but live, sparkling water from the spring—added a little salt and simmered him on the stove for half an hour or so.

"After the kettle cooled off, Uncle 'Bije' cut up the big fish into little pieces, and floured them. Then he cut up a pound of salt pork into thin slices, and, also, three or four onions from the garden, and fried both in a pan until they were golden brown.

"He also cut up a half a dozen potatoes, after digging them from the kitchen garden, and then he

got out the big chowder kettle, and in it stacked layers of fish, pork and onions and potatoes, and poured in the water in which he had boiled the fish, and put the whole on the stove to simmer.

"After half an hour or so, he salted and peppered the chowder to taste, and added a pound of butter, and a pint of cream and some milk, and covered the kettle and let it simmer some more.



"A WHALE OF A COD FISH"

A Specimen of An 82 Pound Cod in Peabody Museum

"While 't was cooking, he went down to the ship's bakery, and got a few pounds of chowder crackers, and added a portion of them to the chowder, after dipping them into cold water from the spring.

"When that chowder was done, the family sat down to feast. A bowl or two of it was a pretty good meal. Same was shared with the neighbors, and among them were stout men who, when they heard that Uncle 'Bije' was making an old Salem fish

chowder, rowed round the harbor so as to get an appetite.

“That’s the way a genuine old Salem fish chowder was made. No harm in telling the family secret now. The chowder can not be duplicated. No big fresh cod fish these days, you know, and no potatoes and onions right out of the kitchen garden, nor the patience to attend to the detail of the art of cooking.

“The tin can age has some economies to be sure. But there are hours when I yearn for the nourishment of a good old Salem fish chowder.”

### “QUAKER SUNDAY”

Who recalls “Quaker Sunday?”

Boys, of the nineties, watched Quakers walking to their red brick meeting house on Warren street, and called it “Quaker Sunday.”

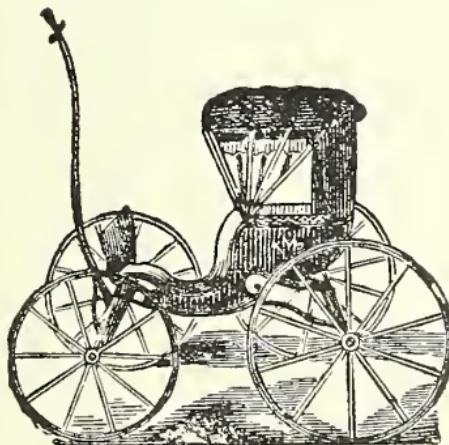
The Quakers walked slowly and meditatively, some in Quakers garb, some dressed more worldly, but none in pride or vanity. They walked serenely, as men and women who had put aside cares and troubles of the work week, to make Sunday a day of worship in their calm and peaceful way.

“Quaker Sunday”—quiet and peaceful, what if it should return to this noisy, troubled world?

### THE BABY BUGGY

A carriage maker built it to last 100 years to a day as did the deacon's one horse chaise.

In it, the ancestor rode, and so did his children and his grandchildren. But the babies of the next generation rode in a carriage lighter and more fancy.



### THE ANCESTRAL BABY BUGGY

Jack and Jill, in their days, rode in "the speed wagon" gas engined and rubber tired.

Little Judy rode in a hammock slung in the automobile. She's now an airplane hostess.

And so you have a fragment of an idea of changes in baby carries in old Salem.

### HOW LIFE IS SPENT

An old Salem gentleman, of the nineties, pasted this newspaper clipping in his scrap book:

“An eminent statistician has figured that the average man of 60 has spent the years of his life thus—

“20 years in sleep.

“17½ years in working.

“7½ years in pursuit of pleasure.

“3 years in eating, and nine months more while waiting to be served.

“6¼ years in walking, or otherwise exercising for health.

“2 years in this and that, like getting hair cuts and the beard trimmed, and shopping.

“2½ years in doing nothing at all, or loafing.”

It may be that the old gentleman didn’t approve of the statistics, for he penned beneath the clipping—

“Don’t be an average man.—nor a statistician.”

### “MAGNETIC REPOSE”

Do you sleep north and south, or east and west? Not that it matters now. Old Salem seaman believed in sleeping north, when they could, so as to pick up electrical currents like the compass.

In the scrap book of a Salem gentleman of the nineties is pasted a clipping entitled “Magnetic Repose.” Baron Reichenbach is quoted as saying that “Sleeping with the feet towards the equator is good for the health, while sleeping east and west is slow suicide.”

Furthermore, it’s told that “Dr. Fishweick, of Megdeburg who habitually slept with his head towards the North Pole, lived 109 years.”

The old gentleman, who kept the scrap book, did not add a note to tell which way he slept.

### BIG WIND AND HAIL

The big wind of Sept. 23, 1815, blew ocean’s water over Salem wharves and into streets, and it blew salt spray inland 40 miles.

The big hail storm of Aug. 1, 1815, broke 130,000 window panes in old Salem houses.

## THE PURITAN HAT

John Puritan wore a hat tall of crown and wide of brim.



## THE PRACTICAL PURITAN HAT

Its tall crown kept his head warm in winter and cool in summer.

Its broad brim kept the sun out of his eyes and the rain and snow off his ears and the back of his neck.

He had no sinus troubles, and his ears did not get deaf. He breathed air scented with pine and balsam, as well as wore a hat high of crown and wide of brim.

The hat band made of woolen felt, was good for a life time and the oldest son succeeded to it and its benefits.

### CALIFORNIA SONG

When the bark Eliza sailed from Derby wharf in 1849, the gold-seekers sang a long song to the tune of "Oh! Susannah." One verse is offered:—

"I came from Salem City  
With my washboard on my knee;  
I'm going to California  
The gold dust for to see.  
It rained all day the day I left,  
The weather it was dry;  
The sun so hot I froze to death,  
Oh, brother, don't you cry.

#### The Chorus.

"Oh, California!  
That's the land for me!  
I'm going to California  
With my wash board on my knee."

### THE OLD BAKERY

Housekeepers sent, or carried, pots of beans to the bakery Saturday morning. The baker chalked on each pot the initials of its owner, and put it in the oven. The owner called for the pot of baked beans, hot from the oven, in time for supper. Usually, the pot was carried in a bandanna or bundle handkerchief. A custom somewhat social. At least, news and gossip was exchanged while customers waited for beans—and the baker did up a loaf of brown bread.

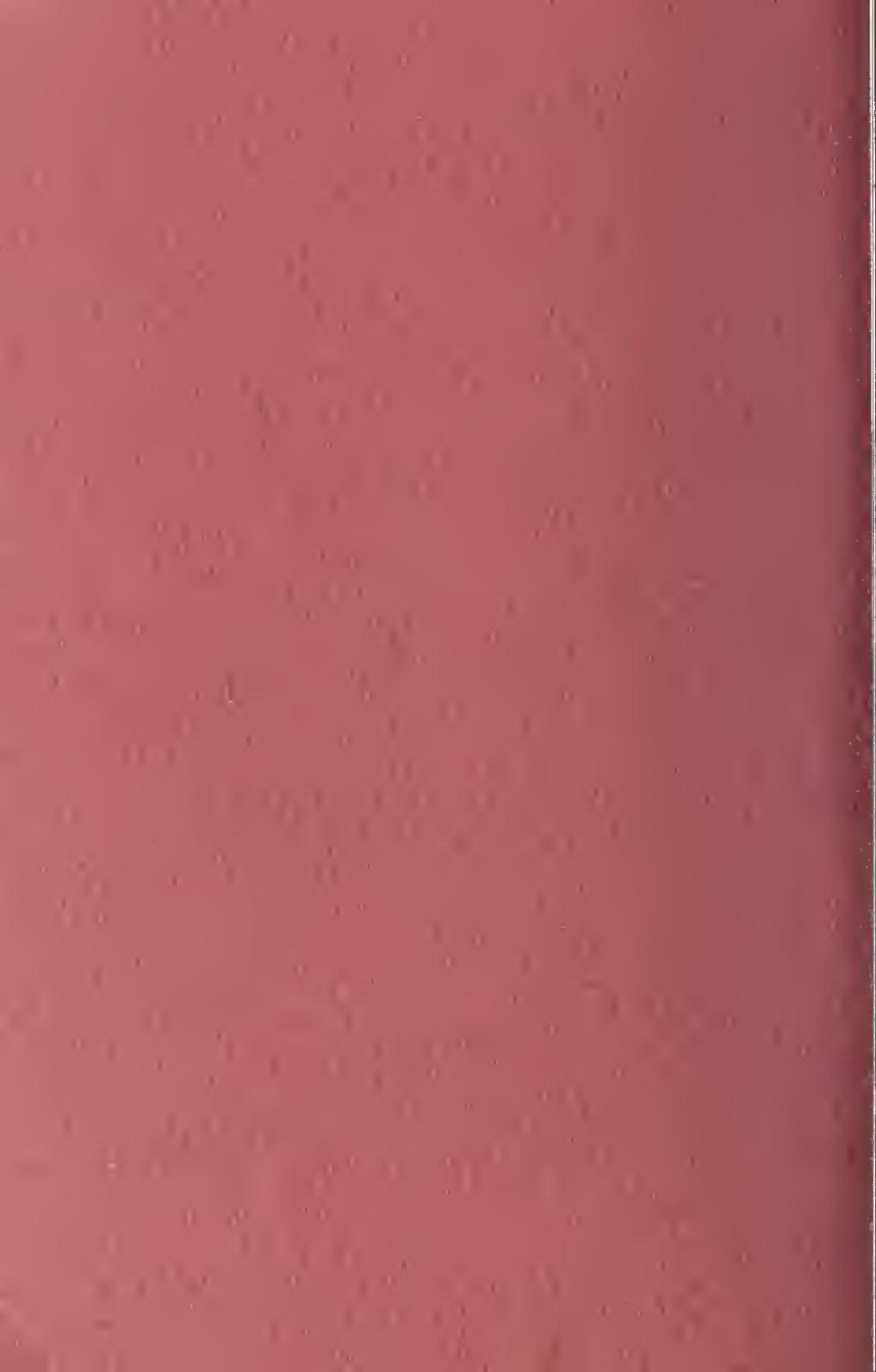
### THE THREE SIDES

“Keep in mind that there are three sides to each argument—

“Your side, my side and the right side.”

*From a salesman's note book.*







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